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BILL: House Bill 270
TITLE: Environment - Testing for Lead in Drinking Water - Public and Nonpublic Schools
DATE: February 24, 2017
POSITION: OPPOSE
COMMITTEE: Environment and Transportation
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House Bill 270 requires the Department of the Environment, in consultation with the State Department of Education, to adopt specified regulations, on or before October 1, 2017, to require periodic testing for the presence of lead in each drinking water outlet located in an occupied public or nonpublic school building; and authorizes the Department of the Environment, in consultation with the State Department of Education, to provide a waiver from specified testing requirements under specified circumstances.

PSSAM **opposes** House Bill 270.

Local superintendents fully understand and recognize the danger of lead in water. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) drinking water is estimated to be the source of about 20 percent of Americans' lead exposure. Although the greatest risk is to infants using formula mixed with contaminated water, drinking water contaminated with lead can cause damage to the health of students of all ages. Keeping our students free from harm regarding health issues, particularly lead poisoning in water, will always remain a top priority for all local superintendents.

However, House Bill 270 is not needed. There are existing federal standards as well as federal and state regulations that currently address this specific issue. The required regulations are comprehensive, detailed, and very thorough. Local school superintendents stick to the letter of the law on this issue. We firmly believe that the health and safety of Maryland's public schools students are not at risk due to our compliance and strict adherence to the existing laws.

For the reasons stated above, PSSAM **OPPOSES** House Bill 270.