



Vermont  
Superintendents  
Association



January 23, 2018

Dear Members of the Senate Education Committee:

Our Associations have an interest in S.279, an act related to radon testing in schools.

While we understand the purpose of the legislation, we are concerned that the tenet of the bill infers a causal relationship between lung cancer and **radon exposure in schools**. Schools are not the only place that students and teachers can be exposed to radon. Since children spend more time at home, high radon levels at home can pose a much greater threat to their health.

Our position on the matter of legislation to require radon testing in schools is this:

If the Vermont General Assembly determines that the risks associated with radon exposure necessitate legislative actions beyond supporting work with schools through the Vermont Department of Health's **Envision** program, we recommend the following:

- Consider legislation that requires school districts and other public entities to (with reasonable notice) provide access to the Vermont Department of Public Health (and/or its agents) for the purposes of conducting radon testing and monitoring.
- Include within the legislation a provision granting access to public buildings by the Vermont Health Department and/or its agents and/or the Vermont Department of Buildings and General Services and/or its agents so that those entities can conduct mitigation of radon exposure, when necessary.
- With respect to both 1 and 2 above, include an explicit statement that expenses of monitoring, testing and mitigation would be borne by the State of Vermont directly and not by the affected entities.

In conveying these recommendations, we wish to call your attention to the following information:

- A search of laws and regulations addressing radon and schools indicates that very few states have enacted laws that require radon testing and mitigation by local school districts.
- We observe that many school districts and supervisory unions are challenged to contend with the abundance of mandates imposed by the State and Federal Governments enacted over the last decade or so.
- There has been a moratorium on school construction aid since 2007.

Again, we respectfully ask that, if the General Assembly wishes to prioritize radon testing and mitigation in schools beyond the current Envision program resources and protocols, that it enact legislation **with funding** that requires the Department of Health, etc to **manage and operate** the program. Proper resources and capacity will be essential to the prioritization of this initiative.

We believe that the views conveyed above are clear and straight-forward. Please let us know if you would like us to appear before the committee to present these views in person and answer any questions.

Best,



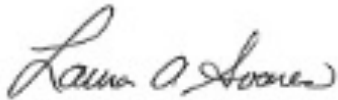
Jeffrey Francis, Vermont Superintendents Association



Nicole Mace, Vermont School Boards Association



Jay Nichols, Vermont Principals' Association



Laura Soares, Vermont School Boards Insurance Trust



Brenda Fleming, Vermont Association of School Business Officials