

# School Emergency Repair Program

Two months ago, the **Fund Our Facilities coalition** announced that the School District of Philadelphia needs an immediate investment of \$170 million to make critical repairs to school buildings throughout the District to ensure the health and safety of the students and staff in those buildings.

Various media reports over the past two years have shed light on the toxic conditions of some of Philadelphia's schools. But these problems are not unique to Philadelphia.

School buildings throughout the state, from Allegheny County to Lackawanna County are in disrepair, resulting in often dangerous and unhealthy conditions for students and teachers.

Sen. Vincent is presenting two separate options – **SB 555 and SB 556** – to establish the School Emergency Repair Program.

- SB 555 would establish, within the Department of Education, a \$125 million program funded from several Commonwealth special funds with outstanding balances.
- SB 556 would establish, within the Department of Education, a \$125 million program funded from the current state budget surplus.

In both bills the legislation would create a grant program that would direct:

- \$85 million to the School District of Philadelphia.
- \$30 million to 134 school districts throughout the state with a significant number of students experiencing poverty.
- \$10 million to the remaining public schools in the state.

School districts could use the grant funding solely for emergency repairs, such as lead and asbestos abatement or remediation, HVAC repair or replacement, electrical system repair or replacement, plumbing repair or replacement, roof and window repair or replacement and other repairs or replacements that present a health or safety issue.

**"We are in a position to fix a critical structural need and cannot lose this opportunity to provide thousands of teachers, students and school staffers with a healthy, safe environment each day," Senator Vincent Hughes said. "The investments I am proposing would help fund the critical maintenance and repair and provide those conditions. We must act now and repair the unhealthy and unsafe conditions for the future of our students and our education system."**

The Fund Our Facilities Coalition is advocating for a commonsense agenda based on the following:

- Every child across the Commonwealth has the right to a quality public education in a school that is safe, healthy, and clean.
- For too long, students across the state have suffered from catastrophic disinvestment in their schools, resulting in physical and environmental hazards in their school buildings.
- As leaders in our communities, we have a moral imperative to work in a unified way to ensure that no child is ever again poisoned in their classroom.

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