

# NEWS

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*... from the Illinois House of Representatives*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**FOR MORE INFORMATION**  
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## May Legislation Requiring Schools to Improve Air Quality Passes House

*Measure Aims to Protect Schoolchildren from Potentials Heath Hazards*

**SPRINGFIELD** – Legislation sponsored by State Rep. Karen May (D-Highland Park) requiring school districts to develop a comprehensive indoor air quality program passed the House on Tuesday.

“It is vital to the health of our children that we make sure that the air that they breathe is healthy, clean and safe,” May said. “We are learning more each day about the dangers that indoor air pollution poses. This legislation will require schools to be aware of this problem and develop a clear and concise plan to deal with it.

House Bill 695, which May developed in coordination with the Healthy Schools Initiative, directs public schools districts to prepare indoor air quality plans. School districts must also notify parents of this policy through modes of communication that are already in place like newsletters and internet sites. Currently, air quality programs for public and private buildings and private schools and are monitored by OSHA, the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration. However, public schools are exempt from this monitoring.

Poor indoor air quality can lead to a number of health problems for children including asthma. One of the hazards caused by inadequate air circulation is the development of toxic mold. Mold spores thrive in humid and poorly ventilated areas and can grow on any organic surface, such as wood and plaster. An area that becomes infested with toxic mold can lead to increased chances for airborne illnesses.

“Thirty or forty years ago, we might not have needed this legislation,” May said. “Back then, before air conditioning was as available as it is now, windows were kept open at schools and air quality was generally better. But today, our children could be breathing dangerous air at school and in light of that fact we need to take action.”

House Bill 695 now moves to the Senate for consideration.

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