

2015 -- H 5499

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2015

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A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- HEALTH AND SAFETY OF PUPILS

Introduced By: Representatives O'Grady, Handy, Amore, Carson, and Morin

Date Introduced: February 12, 2015

Referred To: House Health, Education & Welfare

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Title 16 of the General Laws entitled "EDUCATION" is hereby amended
2 by adding thereto the following chapter:

3 CHAPTER 21.6

4 GREEN CLEANING ACT OF 2015

5 **16-21.6-1. Title.** – This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Green Cleaning
6 Act of 2015."

7 **16-21.6-2. Legislative findings and intent.** – It is hereby found and declared as follows:

8 (1) Research shows a clear link between poor indoor air quality, sick students and
9 teachers, and poor academic and occupational performance. While an effective cleaning program
10 has been scientifically proven to protect against the spread of a variety of diseases and
11 contaminants, some traditional cleaners contain chemicals that may have a greater impact on the
12 environment or a vulnerable population.

13 (2) Cleaning and maintenance products and procedures that are more sustainable in terms
14 of human and environmental health are increasingly being developed, are commonly available
15 and have become cost competitive.

16 (3) School districts, public and private elementary and secondary schools should
17 implement green cleaning programs which utilize environmentally preferable cleaning and
18 maintenance products and which promote practices for sustainable cleaning, including paper and
19 equipment procurement.

1 (4) There is a widespread benefit from a marketplace that encourages innovation to
2 develop products that perform effectively while reducing their environmental impact.

3 **16-21.6-3. Definitions.** – As used in this chapter, the following words and phrases, unless
4 a different meaning is plainly required by the context, shall have the following meanings:

5 (1) "Elementary and secondary schools" means facilities used for instruction of
6 elementary or secondary students by:

7 (i) Any school district;

8 (ii) Any charter school;

9 (iii) Any school for students with disabilities; or

10 (iv) Any other private or parochial elementary or secondary school with greater than
11 twenty-five (25) students.

12 (2) "Environmentally preferable cleaning and maintenance products" means those
13 cleaning and maintenance products and equipment intended to clean surfaces within a school
14 facility (such as, but not limited to: glass cleaners, bathroom cleaners, carpet cleaners and general
15 surface cleaners) that perform effectively and simultaneously meet the cleaning needs of the
16 school while minimizing adverse impacts on human health and the environment.

17 (3) "Environmentally preferable paper" means janitorial paper products that minimize the
18 environmental impact resulting from their use, production, transport and disposal.

19 (4) "Facility" means any school building or facility used for instructional purposes and
20 the surrounding grounds or other sites used for playgrounds, athletics or other instructional
21 purposes.

22 **16-21.6-4. Green cleaning supply guidelines and specifications.** – (a) The department
23 of elementary and secondary education (which shall be designated the lead agency for the
24 purposes of this chapter) shall, in consultation with the department of health, and a panel of
25 stakeholders (to be appointed by the director of elementary and secondary education which shall
26 include cleaning industry representatives, nongovernmental organizations, and others) establish
27 and amend on a biennial basis guidelines and specifications for environmentally preferable
28 cleaning and maintenance products, equipment and paper, for use in school facilities. The
29 department of elementary and secondary education shall provide multiple avenues by which
30 cleaning and maintenance products, equipment and paper may be determined to be
31 environmentally preferable under the guidelines. At a minimum, the guidelines shall include the
32 United States Environmental Protection Agency's Design for the Environment (DfE) Program,
33 the EcoLogo program administered by TerraChoice, Green Seal as avenues, as well as alternative
34 means of qualification, such as: a submission of testing by an accredited third party verifying that

1 the product meets the criteria of one of the recognized standards and others as determined
2 appropriate by the department of elementary and secondary education.

3 (b) The guidelines and specifications established under this section shall not prohibit the
4 use of disinfectants, disinfecting cleaners, sanitizers, or any other antimicrobial product regulated
5 by the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (7 U.S.C. 136 et seq.), when necessary
6 to protect public health; provided, that the use of these products is in accordance with responsible
7 cleaning procedures requirements. The guidelines and specifications may stipulate
8 environmentally preferable requirements preferability (including, but not limited to, the use of
9 third-party certifications of environmental preferability) to be made in reference to such products.

10 (c) The guidelines and specifications established under this section shall permit the use of
11 products outside the scope of the guidelines developed under this section, and those products
12 otherwise excluded from the environmental standards established by any of the generally
13 recognized third-party entities listed in the guidelines developed herein.

14 (d) Guidelines and specifications must be established after a review and evaluation of
15 existing research and must be completed no later than one hundred eighty (180) days after the
16 effective date of this chapter. Guidelines and specifications should include implementation
17 practices, including inspection and evaluation. The completed guidelines and specifications must
18 be posted on the department of elementary and secondary education website.

19 **16-21.6-5. Use of environmentally preferable cleaning supplies.** – No later than ninety
20 (90) days after implementation of the guidelines and specifications established under § 16-21.6-4
21 herein, all elementary and secondary schools shall establish a sustainable cleaning policy and
22 exclusively purchase and use environmentally preferable cleaning products, equipment and paper
23 pursuant to said guidelines and specifications; provided, however, that schools shall not dispose
24 of existing products, equipment or paper, but rather shall be permitted to deplete existing supplies
25 and implement the new requirements in the procurement cycle for the following year.

26 **16-21.6-6. Dissemination.** – (a) Within thirty (30) days of the completion of the
27 guidelines and specifications pursuant to § 16-21.6-4, the department of elementary and
28 secondary education shall determine and implement a method for disseminating to each
29 elementary and secondary school in the state, a copy of said guidelines and specifications. The
30 department of elementary and secondary education shall maintain a website that promotes the use
31 of environmentally preferable cleaning and maintenance programs, which provides information
32 on how procurement officials and others can determine which cleaning products, paper and/or
33 equipment meet the criteria for environmental preferability, and that will include best practices
34 for covered schools regarding environmentally preferable cleaning and maintenance products.

1 Said website should contain prominent language stating that the guidelines do not apply to
2 products excluded under §§ 16-21.6-4(b) and (c). The department of elementary and secondary
3 education shall also provide on-going assistance to schools to carry out the requirements of this
4 chapter.

5 (b) In the event that the guidelines and specifications under § 16-21.6-4 are updated by
6 the department of elementary and secondary education, the department shall provide a copy of
7 updates to each school and shall post all updated materials on its website.

8 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
A N A C T
RELATING TO EDUCATION -- HEALTH AND SAFETY OF PUPILS

1 This act would require the use of environmentally preferable cleaning supplies in all
2 elementary and secondary schools. The state department of elementary and secondary education
3 would be placed in charge of implementation.

4 This act would take effect upon passage.

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