

# Support School Radon Protection Act

**SB2438** - Ellman (Primary), Koehler, Haplin, Castro, Feigenholtz, Joyce, Fine, Villa, Morrison

**HB3691** - A. Williams (Primary), Guzzardi, Stava-Murray, Blair-Sherlock, Avelar, Johnson, Mah, B. Hernandez, Yang Rohr, Hirschauer, Favor Dias



## RADIOACTIVE RADON & SAVING LIVES

- Radon is a colorless, tasteless, odorless, radioactive gas and the second leading cause of lung cancer.<sup>1</sup> It can penetrate concrete floors of any style or age building.<sup>2</sup> Only testing finds elevated levels.<sup>3</sup>
- Children exposed to radon may have higher estimated radiation doses than adults.<sup>4</sup>
- Radon KILLS MORE PEOPLE in Illinois than asbestos, carbon monoxide, fire, and smoke from fires, COMBINED.<sup>5</sup>
- Radon-related lung cancers kills 1,100 people in Illinois yearly.<sup>6</sup>

## PREVENTING RADON-INDUCED LUNG CANCER SAVES MONEY TOO

- Each person saved from lung cancer saves society \$370,000 est. direct and indirect medical costs.<sup>7</sup>
- The School Radon Protection Act can save millions of dollars.

## IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED TO CURRENT LAW

- *The Daily Herald* reports 85 of the 100 schools assessed, had not conducted any radon testing in the 14 years since the School Code *Sec. 10-20.48* began recommending ALL schools test for radon.<sup>8</sup>
- Of the schools tested, the *Herald* reports more than half had high radon levels.<sup>9</sup> The IL Board of Education's radon report concurs, showing, of the school buildings tested for radon, 63% failed.<sup>10</sup>

## THE SCHOOL RADON PROTECTION ACT

Protects 2+ million Illinois public school children and staff <sup>11</sup> from dangerous levels of cancer-causing radon.

- ✓ Ensures schools are tested every 5 years.
- ✓ Allows schools to use their own staff (specially trained) to conduct the initial screening tests.
- ✓ For failing areas, confirmation tests are performed by licensed radon professionals.
- ✓ Ensures mitigation of buildings with confirmed high-radon levels within 2 years.
- ✓ Allows Life Safety Funds to cover cost of radon testing and mitigation.
- ✓ Ensures new schools are built with industry-standard, radon-resistant techniques.

**More info: Dan Potter- Illinois Radon Policy Taskforce, DanPotter@DuPageRadon.com, 630-836-1918**

<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<sup>2</sup> Yes Dirt

<sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<sup>4</sup> Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, Patient Education and Care Instruction Sheet

<sup>5</sup> Illinois Emergency Management Agency and Homeland Security radon program, Asbestos Nation, USA Facts summarizing data from the Center for Disease Control, U.S Fire Administration

<sup>6</sup> Illinois Emergency Management Agency and Homeland Security radon program

<sup>7</sup> American Assoc. of Radon Scientist and Technologists *Combining data from Center for Disease Control, National Institute for Health, US Census and EPA*™K. Hoyleman 2022.

<sup>8</sup> Daily Herald *Few suburban schools follow state's radon testing recommendation* Jake Griffin 10/21/2023.

<sup>9</sup> Daily Herald *Few suburban schools follow state's radon testing recommendation* Jake Griffin 10/21/2023.

<sup>10</sup> Illinois Board of Education 2022 School District Radon Report

<sup>11</sup> Ballotpedia *Public Education in Illinois, 2020*

Only one reason has been given for not protecting school children, teachers and staff from **radioactive radon**, via SB 2438:

### Cost

Understandable, but it may be less than most think.

**Most Years \$0** Schools need only test every five years.

**Every 5 Yrs** likely **\$100s** (yes hundreds), out-of-pocket screening per building

Schools would use their own staff (after getting free training from IEMA) to do the testing. The tests kits are \$7 to \$15 each. Usually, one per ground-floor room is needed.

**If Tests High** likely **\$3,000 to \$20,000** per building

The *Daily Herald's* investigation<sup>1</sup> revealed pro testing and mitigation costs:

- **\$11k** for one building of Millburn Elementary District.
- **\$19k** for six buildings (\$3k per building) of Geneva School District.

These totals are likely **less than ½ of 1 percent** of an average school's \$7.6 mil yearly budget<sup>2</sup>.

Professional pre and post mitigation testing of high areas tends to be \$1k to \$4k per building. Mitigation of high areas tends to be \$2k to \$16k per building. "Mega schools" may be more. The systems' maintenance is nearly zero. Fans tend to last 5-12 years and cost under \$900 to replace.

Life Safety Funds are able to be used. It is possible that Tort Funds may also be used. We are working with the Ill. Assoc. of School Boards to see what other funds may be available.

**But, if safety is a school's number one priority, shouldn't it be viewed that funds simply have to be found, somehow?**

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Sponsors

**SB2438** - Ellman (Primary), Koehler, Haplin, Castro, Feigenholtz, Joyce, Fine, Villa, Morrison, Guzmán, Edly-Allen, Belt, Porfino, Johnson, Faraci, Murphy



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<sup>1</sup> Daily Herald Few suburban schools follow state's radon testing recommendation. Lake County 10/21/2023

<sup>2</sup> School District Annual Financial Report (ISBE Form 50-35) Financial Data Table vs radon cost estimates.