



Included in this Newsletter:

- Budget Passed
- 2023 Primary Sponsored Bills
- Health and Gov't Operations Committee Highlights
- Other Passed Legislation Highlights
- Howard County Legislation
- Other and Interim
- Contact Me

Dear Friends -

With the adjournment of the 2023 Maryland General Assembly legislative session, I must express my appreciation for the privilege of serving as your voice in Annapolis. Because of the 2022 redistricting, I no longer represent Baltimore and Howard Counties in the previous District 12, rather, I now represent the residents of the new District 12A, wholly contained in Howard County. Still, my goals remain the same: to advocate on your behalf and propose and support legislation that moves Maryland forward.

In addition to serving on the Health and Government Operations Committee, the Government Operations and Health Facilities subcommittee, and the Public Health and Minority Health Disparities subcommittee, I am pleased to have been appointed by Speaker Adrienne Jones to serve on the State Advisory Council on Hereditary and Congenital Diseases.

It was a busy legislative session with 3000 bills introduced in the 90-day session. I am pleased to report we continue to make progress in addressing quality of life issues important to all Marylanders: healthcare; education; public safety; social justice; and ensuring environmentally sustainable and economically thriving communities.

Budget Passed

We passed a balanced budget that, despite unexpected revenue shortfalls, prioritized investments in Maryland's economy, infrastructure, education, technology, and transportation, and begins to address recent underinvestment in in state agencies and personnel that has hindered operations. It also expands access to behavioral and somatic health care, meets our pension and debt obligations, and preserves adequate reserve funds of \$2.5 billion (10% of general fund revenues) in the Revenue Stabilization Account (Rainy Day Fund) and \$351 million in the General Fund, with nearly \$200 million of general funds reserved to provide tax relief. The budget makes:

Investments in People

- 2% cost-of-living adjustment (5% for law enforcement officers) to provide competitive salaries for recruiting and retaining great workers as we seek to rebuild state government and fill record vacancies across agencies.

- Employee salary increments - one bonus increment for employees with five years or more of service, and targeted salary increases for hard to fill positions.
- Funding of the fiscal 2023 and 2024 costs of a 4.5% COLA provided to State employees in November 2022, to restore deferred compensation match for State employees, and launch pilot programs.

Investments in Education

- Full funding of all fiscal 2024 Blueprint for Maryland mandates plus \$900 million to the Blueprint's Future Fund to cover out-year costs of Blueprint implementation.
- Increased funding for public schools totaling \$8.7 billion.
- Increases of an estimated \$660.7 million, or 9.1%, in direct aid to local school systems.
- \$243.7 million (11.1%) increase in State support to Maryland's four-year public colleges and universities while limiting tuition increases for in-state students to 2.0%.
- Community college formula aid increase of \$39.9 million (12%), and \$18.5 million (16%) increase in aid to nonpublic higher education institutions.
- \$14.9 million (17%) increase in funding for Educational Excellence scholarships.



Investments In Health

- \$8.5 million to eliminate the senior care waitlist.
- \$35 million to erase the projected Maryland Emergency Medical System Operations Fund deficit in fiscal 2024 and 2025, increase support for shock trauma directly, and provide aid to trauma centers experiencing financial challenges.
- \$14 billion in Medicaid funding, allowing coverage to over 1.5 million residents.
- New behavioral health investments to strengthen the State's behavioral health system and better address the mental health crisis.
- Rate increases of 3% - 4% for providers serving vulnerable populations effective July 1, 2023, and another 8% in January 2024.

Investments to Assist the Economically Vulnerable

- \$11.3 million to reimburse Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and cash assistance recipient victims of electronic benefits transfer skimming.
- \$45 permanent increase in the monthly benefit per recipient of Temporary Cash Assistance and Temporary Disability Assistance.
- \$11.2 million in food banks funding beyond usual levels.

- Continued investments that enhance the child tax credit and expanding other benefits that support working families, help Marylanders in need, and lift families out of poverty.

Investments in Security

- Over \$40 million in support for victim services ensuring awards to service providers are maintained at previous levels and providing targeted enhancements to support domestic violence victims and rape crisis centers.
- \$46 million funding of police aid above the statutorily required amount, with the enhanced funding targeted to jurisdictions experiencing higher levels of crime.
- \$161 million to improve State government cybersecurity.

Investments In Our Natural Resources and Climate Change Solutions

- \$160 million to support State parks and forests under the Great Maryland Outdoors Act.
- \$60 million for bay restoration activities.
- \$15 million to implement the Tree Solutions Now Act.
- \$15 million through the Climate Solutions Now Act to support housing projects targeting the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, Climate Corp, and other green energy programs.
- Funding to support development and utilization of renewable energy and energy efficiency programs.

2023 Primary Sponsored Bills

I am pleased to report passage of the following bills for which I was the lead sponsor.

HB0006/SB0092 – Department of General Services – Energy-Conserving Standards (Maryland Sustainable Buildings Act of 2023): Requires the Department of General services to establish and periodically update of standards for State buildings to conserve energy and minimize adverse impacts on birds, consistent with U.S. Green Building Council’s Innovation Credit for reducing bird collisions and the American Bird Conservancy bird-friendly design recommendations. Also, required the Maryland Green Building Council to include the standards in requirements established for the Maryland High Performance Green Building Program.

HB0018/SB0851 – Maryland General and Limited Power of Attorney Act – Alterations: makes changes in the statutory Power of Attorney form and allows persons to empower an agent to act on their behalf in management of tangible personal and real property, trusts, and estates in applying for governmental program and benefits. The revised form better clarifies the force and effect (risks) of assigning authority to another with respect to specific powers relating to successor agents, compensation, gifts, or transfers and opening joint accounts and beneficiary designations.

HB0470/SB0256 – Environment – Fire-Fighting – Oriented Strand Board – Prohibition: To protect Fire Fighters from exposure to the resultant carcinogenic fumes, prohibits and establishes penalties for the burning of oriented strand board in fire-fighting training exercises.



HB0745/SB0340 – Criminal Law – False Statements – Emergency or Commission of Crime (Antiswatting Act of 2023): Prohibits and imposes civil and criminal penalties for “swatting” – the deliberate reporting to a public emergency service entity a knowingly false statement or compliant for the purpose of soliciting a police response, with reckless disregard of causing bodily harm to an individual.

HB0808/SB859 – Reproductive Health Protection Act (Dual sponsorship with Delegate Nicole Williams): – Protects persons receiving, providing, or assisting a resident or visitor in Maryland in the accessing of reproductive health services that are legally protected in Maryland – including abortions – from the sharing of the medical records associated with that care in response to a subpoena or other legal requests from another state, if the purpose of the record request is to facilitate an investigation or prosecution, civil or criminal, of an alleged violation of the other state’s laws. Also, prohibits a Maryland judge from requiring a person to give testimony/a statement/ or produce evidence for a case involving an alleged violation of the criminal law of another state relating to health care that is legally protected in Maryland. This is one of four bills constituting leadership’s Reproductive Health Protections Bill Package, all of which passed,

SB0162/HB0204 – Maryland Aviation Commission – Duties, Composition and Member Orientation: Expands the composition of the commission by four by giving two nominations each to the respective County Executives of Howard County and Anne Arundel County and modifying the Commission’s charge to include consideration of community impacts in formulation of airport growth and expansion planning.

The following bills passed the House, stalled in the Senate, and I will likely reintroduce:

HB0034 – Failure to Pay Rent Proceedings– Prohibition on Rent Increases and Shielding of Court Records: Requires shielding of court records in cases where there is no finding for eviction or against the tenens, such as s if a tenant was taken to eviction court but prevailed or resolved the situation with the landlord prior to the hearing. Also creates a mechanism for requesting shielding of record in cases of isolated non-payment findings against a tenant over a long period and prohibits a landlord from increasing a tenant’s rent solely because of a judgment against the tenant in a failure to pay rent action.

HB0744/SB0405 – Criminal Law – Public Safety – Interference with a Public Safety Answering Point – Penalties: Prohibits and establishes civil and criminal penalties for purposeful actions to interrupt or impair the functioning of emergency service operational systems via digital or nondigital methods.



Here are some bills I introduced that were not acted on by the House, but remain on my list of legislative priorities for future sessions:

- Implementing a recommendation from the Attorney General's COVID-19 Access to Justice Covid Task Force to allow heirs to take title of inherited property before the property taxes are paid. This would increase chances of creating and sustaining generational wealth and decrease the number of real property tax sales since, as the owner of the property, the heir would have access to homeowner tax assistance programs and the ability to leverage the property to meet the property tax obligations.
- Ensuring school children who fail vision screenings obtain the comprehensive eye exams and recommended corrective eyewear.
- Establishing a Technology and Science Advisory Commission to make recommendations on the best and most responsible ways for the state to engage in the expanding use of algorithms and the world of artificial intelligence (AI).
- Creating a state mattress recycling and stewardship program.
- Establishing a Youth Sports Safety Advisory Commission
- Creating a presumption for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder for 9-1-1 Specialist and other first responders.

Health and Gov't Operations Committee Highlights

As a member of the Health and Government Committee I worked on important initiatives, such as:

- Protecting reproductive freedom, increasing access to care on college campuses, and protecting Maryland patients and providers from out-of-state investigations
- Fully funding the 9-8-8 crisis hotline with \$12M per year
- Extending collaborative care between primary and behavioral healthcare providers
- Expanding wraparound services for children and youth most at-risk
- Planning for a 21st Century behavioral care delivery system



HB 283/SB 460 – Trans Equity Act: Brings Maryland into compliance with existing federal legal nondiscriminatory standards on the provision of comprehensive healthcare coverage for transgender services. It ensures Maryland Medicaid offers the same *comprehensive healthcare coverage to the transgender community* as private insurers, thus reducing health inequities for low-income Marylanders in the transgender community who cannot afford/access private commercial insurance. This is low cost, high impact legislation which will increase mental wellbeing, reduce suicidality, and save lives.

HB 376: Prohibits imposition of a copayment, coinsurance, or deductible for insurance coverage of diagnostic *breast and supplemental breast examinations*, thus helping ensure fewer patients are prevented because of financial limitation from receiving timely imaging studies needed for diagnosis and treatment.

HB815/ SB965 - Requires insurers, nonprofit health service plans, and health maintenance organizations) to provide *coverage for recommended follow-up diagnostic imaging to assist in the diagnosis of lung cancer*, subject to specified cost-sharing limitations. The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) must conduct an assessment on current outreach, education, and health disparities in cancer screening and establish a stakeholder workgroup.

SB 554: *Reimburses members of the National Guard for their health and dental premiums up to \$60 dollars per month.* This first-in-the-nation program will support our National Guard members and is an important recruitment and retention tool for service members.

Other Passed Legislation Highlights

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS PACKAGE

With HB818, above, the legislature passed the following bills to provide privacy protection in making reproductive health decisions in the wake of last summer's U.S. Supreme Court decision overturning the Roe v. Wade decision.

HB 477/SB 341 – Public Senior Higher Education Institutions – Reproductive Health Services Plans – Requirements: Requires colleges and universities to develop a reproductive health services plan that provides at the institution or refers students to a comprehensive range of reproductive health services.

HB 705/ SB 798 – Declaration of Rights – Right to Reproductive Freedom: Creates voter referendum for the November 2024 election that enshrines an individual right to reproductive freedom in Maryland Constitution, including the right to prevent, continue, or end one's own pregnancy.

HB 812 Health – Reproductive Health Services – Protected Information and Insurance Requirements: Requires Maryland Health Care Commission to ensure confidentiality of data to patients who have obtained 'legally protected health care' including reproductive health care.



CANNABIS

HB 556: Creates an equitable licensing, tax, and regulation framework for the new cannabis industry, incorporating the best recreational cannabis practices from other states and learned lessons from the Maryland medical cannabis implementation. It allows license seekers to apply for a combined medical and recreational adult-use licenses, includes a tax rate set to help discourage an illicit market while still helping fund support for social equity applicants and traditionally disenfranchised communities, and creates a more equitable application process to give social equity applicants, those who were disproportionately impacted by cannabis prohibition, an equal opportunity to compete for licenses including:

- Low application fees
- Priority consideration in the licensing process

PUBLIC SAFETY

HB 1/SB 686: The civil statute of limitations for child sexual abuse.

HB 775: An anti-price gouging bill, limits non-seasonal price increases on essential goods and services to 15% during a state of emergency and gives the governor the power during a state of emergency to designate essential goods and services.

HB 4: Prevents a person charged for rape, or certain sexual offenses, against a victim who was the person's legal spouse at the time of the alleged rape or sexual offense, to claim the fact of the marriage means there couldn't have been a rape.

HB 824: Adjusts Maryland's conceal-carry permitting process to include additional disqualifications to state law. including prohibiting possession of a regulated firearm by a person who is younger than twenty-one, a person who suffers from a "mental disorder" and has a history of violent behavior, or a person who has been involuntarily admitted for more than 30 consecutive days to a facility for treatment of a mental disorder. It also doubles the fees for a wear-and-carry permit, a renewal or subsequent application, and a duplicate or modified permit; these fees have not been increased since 1992. The bill complies with last summer's Supreme Court's Bruen decision.

SB 1: Makes the licensing process for wear and carry permits stricter, prohibits an individual from knowingly wearing, carrying, or transporting a firearm on private property without owner consent, and prohibits guns in certain locations, including courthouses, hospitals, schools, and areas where alcohol is served. The bill complies with the Bruen decision.

SB 858: Jaelynn's Law – enhances the penalty for violating the state's safe storage laws, increases the age restriction on unsupervised minors to possess or have access to loaded firearms from 16 to 18, and requires the Deputy Secretary for Public Health Services to develop a youth suicide prevention and firearm safe storage guide.

EDUCATION



HB 384/ SB 248: Prevents colleges and universities from withholding transcripts because of outstanding debt, thereby removing a financial barrier for some students to getting jobs or submitting applications to further their education.

HB 448: Requires a nonpublic school in which a child receiving special education services is placed to pay its teachers a salary that is equivalent to the local school salaries, phased in as specified over three years, beginning in 2025.

HB1290/ SB959 – Maryland 529 Program – Reform: Abolishes and repeals the Maryland 529 Board, specifying that the State Treasurer is the successor, transferring to the Office of the State Treasurer the responsibility for administering the Maryland 529 Program, including the Maryland Prepaid College Trust, the Maryland College Investment Plan, the Maryland Broker-Dealer College Investment Plan, and the Maryland ABLE Program, and requiring the State Treasurer to take certain actions in administering the Program. The Treasurer’s office will be responsible for creating a tiered claims settlement process, with priority being given to account holders who sought reimbursements since the accounts were frozen last summer or who will need a disbursement for the fall semester.



Maryland 529 Reform FAQs

When does the bill go into effect?

The main provisions of Senate Bill 959 go into effect on June 1, 2023, but other provisions go into effect upon the Governor’s signature.

What will happen to my prepaid account?

Existing prepaid accounts may remain open for as long as the contract is in effect. This means that some accounts may remain open for another 20 or so years.

Extensions or upgrades to purchase additional semesters or years will no longer be available after June 1, 2023.

Can I still enroll in the Maryland Prepaid College Trust?

The bill prohibits new enrollments beginning on June 1, 2023, but enrollment is open until that date.

Who will be in charge of the Maryland 529 Program?

Beginning on June 1, the Treasurer will assume responsibility as the sole fiduciary of the Program and all three Plans (ABLE, College Investment, and Prepaid). All Program staff will report to the Treasurer.

How can I share my experience and concerns with the Treasurer?

For general comments or inquiries, please contact MD529@treasurer.state.md.us. For account-specific inquiries, please continue contacting the Maryland 529 Program directly and cc MD529@treasurer.state.md.us.

What earnings rate will be applied to my account?

The Treasurer will undertake a comprehensive review of account holder testimony and actuarial and legal analyses to determine what rate(s) should be applied to accounts.

When will I know what earnings rate will be applied?

The Treasurer has begun working with staff to determine a timeline for implementation and will work as expeditiously as possible to make and announce a determination.

What can I expect out of the settlement process?

In the coming months, the Treasurer will announce the applicable earnings rate(s) and adopt procedures for a settlement process. This aspect of implementation planning is in the earliest stage, but information will be shared with account holders as plans are formalized.

Where can I check for updates?

Regular updates will be provided on social media channels (Facebook - Treasurer Dereck Davis, Instagram - [@mdtreasurerdavis](https://www.instagram.com/mdtreasurerdavis)) and on www.treasurer.state.md.us.

ECONOMY

HB 552 Innovation Economy Infrastructure Act of 2023: Establishes the Build Our Future Grant Pilot Program within the state Department of Commerce to better support technology projects, develop innovation infrastructure and bring needed jobs across the state, by leveraging state dollars for grants to businesses, local governments, non-profits, and academic institutions for infrastructure and technology programs. The bill pairs with the existing Innovation Investment Tax Credit (IITC) and Biotechnology Investment Tax Credit (BIITC) to expand access to capital and bring about significant tech-driven investment in Maryland.

HB 546: Creates the Young Adult Pathway and Maryland Corps to provide a service-year option for high school graduates to work for community organizations and nonprofit groups. These service position can springboard participants into post-service employment, higher education, or apprenticeship, and helps create a culture of across the state Creating and funding this program was a campaign priority of Governor Moore... provides access and exposure to public service for young Marylanders by creating a service year.

HB 548/SB 550: Establishes the Maryland Community Investment Venture Fund to develop opportunities for banking institutions and credit unions to better serve needs of low- to moderate-income areas and provide better access to banking, by encourage private investment and incentivizing banks to stay in low to moderate income neighborhoods, and to establish and retain new business.



ELECTIONS



SB 158 - requires the State Board of Elections and local boards of elections to provide at least the same number of in-person precinct polling locations as the 2018 election.

HB 192 - prohibits untraceable digital currencies (cryptocurrency) use for making political contributions in state elections.

HB 535 -. Requires local boards of elections to send, not later than 43 days before an election, a ballot to voters who have made a request and qualify to vote by absentee ballot. Also, improves and clarifies the state's election system by putting ballot curing and pre-processing into law and prohibiting the tabulation of absentee ballot vote totals before the polls close. And moves for 2024 the statewide primary election and the primary election for the municipal offices of Baltimore City to the second Tuesday in May.

Howard County Legislative Actions

Howard County Delegation secured funding and local bond grants for the following projects and organizations: Centennial Park, Howard County Veterans Monument, Lisbon Volunteer Fire Department, Long Reach Village Center, PHILLIPS School, Howard County/St. Paul, Howard County Public Schools Construction Project, Humanim Woodside Renovation, Clifton Perkin Hospital Center, and Sheppard Pratt Health System.

I am pleased to report that we have secured funding for the following projects in District 12A:

- \$13.3 million Howard Community College's new Mathematics and Athletics Complex
- \$10 million Howard County New Central Library Complex
- \$9 million The Jug Handle Connector
- \$3 million Howard County Housing Commission's Artist Flats Project
- \$2 million Columbia Center for the Theatrical Arts for the New County Cultural Center
- \$1.5 million for the renovation of the HCGH Behavioral Health Unit
- \$1million to the Chrysalis Pavilion in Merriweather Park at Symphony Woods
- \$500,000 for the Howard County Veterans Monument
- \$500,000 Patuxent Commons
- \$250,000 Freetown Farm - Community Ecology Institute
- \$200,000 Long Reach Village Center Shared Kitchen

Howard County local legislation that passed this year included a bill that addressed the safety zone and hunter position under certain circumstances for archery hunters, such as those who are under the authority of a deer management permit or who are actively participating in a hunting program administered by the County, any wild bird or mammal within 50 to 150 yards of certain buildings.

Other and Interim

MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Each year, members of the General Assembly are allocated funds to support the awarding of a Delegate or Senatorial scholarship to Maryland residents pursuing post-secondary education at a two- or four-year Maryland college, university, or private career schools. Applications for my scholarship program are accepted in the spring with the awards determined by summer, based on a demonstrated combination of aptitude, drive, need and commitment. Although applications for 2023-2024 Scholarships closed on April 15th, I encourage those interested to check my webpage [Scholarship Application Portal](#) for information on how to apply for the 2024-2025 academic year starting in January 2024.

GET INVOLVED

Legacy Leaders, Legacy Leadership Institute on Public Policy, University of Maryland School of Public Health: Open to state residents aged 50+ seeking meaningful volunteer opportunities within the offices of elected officials. Applications become available in June and accepted participants receive training from University of Maryland faculty and outside experts in the fall to be prepared to work with Maryland General Assembly members in the upcoming session. For more information contact Wesley Queen at wqueen@umd.edu or 301-405-2529, or please visit [here](#).

Shadow a Delegate: Contact my office if you would like to shadow me in Annapolis for all or part of a day during the 2024 Session. This includes attending floor sessions, committee, delegation, caucus, and stakeholder meetings, and seeing the inner workings of my office. Email: terri.hill@house.state.md.us, Tel: 410-841-3378

Maryland General Assembly: The MGA has an excellent website, <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov>, which allows you to learn anything you'd want to know about your legislators, committees, legislative actions, the legislative process and more. You can hit the MyMGA link to create an account to track legislation that matters to you!

Page Program: Maryland's high school seniors can learn about the legislative process by serving as student pages (for two non-consecutive weeks) during the annual session of the Maryland General Assembly. Class of 2024 high school seniors who are interested in being a page in the General Assembly during the 2024 session, which runs from January to April, should contact Ms. C. Renee Bos (christina_bos@hcpss.org, 410-313-6632), the Page Program Coordinator for Howard County, regarding the application and selection process. For additional questions, contact the Annapolis Page/Intern Coordinator, Dr. Tawana Offer at Tawana.Offer@mlis.state.md.us or 410-946-5120.

Legislative Intern Program: The Legislative Intern Program for College Students provides the opportunity to gain both educational and practical work experience in the Legislative Branch of State government. If you are a college student interested in interning during the 2024 session, which runs from January to April, contact your school's intern coordinator, career counselor, or department dean for an application and for information regarding the submission deadline. Placements are made during the fall semester. Applications should be sent to the Maryland General Assembly Human Resources Department. Contact Ms. Carolyn Pelli at 410-946-5124 or Carolyn.Pelli@mlis.state.md.us with questions or visit [here](#).

Volunteering: Contact my office directly via email or phone if high school age or older are interested in volunteer opportunities. Email: terri.hill@house.state.md.us, Tel: 410-841-3378.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A new term and new administration can mean adapting to transitions and personnel changes. I appreciate the flexibility, dedication, and efforts of my staff: my new Chief of Staff, Sharon Bailey, former Legislative Directors, Ayanna Harrison and Kaira Whitmore, my Legislative Aide, Barbara Albert, Interns Andrea Moreno, India Howard, and Jason Wang (Interim).

I would like to thank my 2022 Scholarship Program Review Committee members, Tressie Rooks and Dennis Hanratty, for countless hours in evaluating the scholarship applications.

I am incredibly grateful for the staff of the House and Senate; the Department of Legislative Services; the Maryland State and Capitol Police; and other security personnel for their professionalism, flexibility, and hard work.

Contact Me

I am always interested in your state legislative concerns and hope that you will get in touch with me to share them. If you are having difficulty working with state agencies or have local concerns, I or my Chief of Staff, Sharon Bailey, may be able to assist you in reaching a resolution or put you in contact with someone who can. You may reach us by phone at 410-841-3378 or email at terri.hill@house.state.md.us.

Be well, stay safe, advocate, and vote!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Terri Hill", with a long, sweeping horizontal line above it.