

The 438th Legislative Session Convenes

The General Assembly reconvened on January 10, 2018. The House unanimously elected Speaker Michael Erin Busch and the Senate elected President Mike Miller to continue as the presiding officers.

There will be a number of issues that need to be addressed as a result of Federal Legislation and I have every confidence that the legislative bodies will work together in a non-partisan fashion to address these issues.

The Federal Tax bill is expected to affect Marylanders in a very negative way and we will work to mitigate the impact of that legislation. We also need to address the children's health care known as CHIP. We currently fund health care for 143,000 children, with the changes in the Federal Health care we need to find a way to continue to provide health care to these children.

The opioid overdose crisis continues to increase in Maryland and in our County. While a tremendous amount of effort has been placed in addressing the opioid overdose issue with Narcan to save lives and "safe places" at the fire houses, we need to continue our work to try to decrease these overdoses.

We will continue to work on school construction and renovation funding for all schools and encouraging more renewal energy to protect our environment.

Update on Maglev and Hyperloop

My Committee, the Environment and Transportation Committee, will receive a briefing from the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) on February 1, 2018. First on the agenda will be the Maglev and Hyperloop projects. The meeting is in the Environment and Transportation Committee, Room 251, in the Lowe House office building at 1:00 pm. This meeting will be open to the public, however only the members of the Committee will be able to ask questions of the State agencies. The briefing will also be live streamed at: <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/webmga/frmcommittees.aspx?pid=av&tab=subject7#house>, just highlight the date and click on the arrow. It will remain available for your viewing any time after the briefing occurs.

"Earned Sick Leave" Veto Overridden

The session began with the process of overriding the governor's vetoes on two bills. This included the overriding of the veto of the Maryland Healthy Working Families Act of 2017 (MHWFA), which we feel is essential to the wellbeing of Maryland workers.

The MHWFA is expected to benefit up to 700,000 Maryland workers. For businesses of 15 or more employees, it offers employees one hour of paid sick leave for every 30 hours worked,

and up to five days per year. Employees must work 106 days before they qualify for the sick leave.

The leave allows employees to not only take time off when they themselves are ill, but also when a family member is ill. It also allows for preventive medical care leave, maternity/paternity leave, or leave related to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

I supported this bill when it first came before the House, and I supported the veto override as well.

Taxpayer Protection Plan

The legislative agenda of this session has been heavily influenced by the passage of the recent Federal tax legislation, and we are taking steps to ensure that the needs of Maryland taxpayers are protected, and that previous exemptions are restored.

With our three bills, we aim to restore the longstanding exemptions that were eliminated by this legislation, including the \$680 million of annual benefits for 92% of Marylanders. To achieve this, we are working to bring back the income tax deduction Maryland residents have counted on for years, which offer deductions up to \$3,200 per dependent.

Beyond this, we are also working to prevent the doubling of the amount of money that the ultra-wealthy can pass on to their heirs that the federal tax law allows. Our bills keep the estate tax consistent with the 2014 state law, preventing the massive tax giveaway to the ultra-wealthy put forward by Congress.

Lastly, our bills create a new charitable fund solely benefitting public education, as to incentivize contributions.

How To Follow Legislation on the General Assembly Website

If you want to look further into what legislation is being debated and passed this session, or look into a specific bill that you have been following, the General Assembly Website is a great tool.

The [General Assembly Website](#) is a wealth of information about the activities of the General Assembly. You can:

- Find your representatives
- Find the status of bills, including Fiscal Notes, Committee votes and voting records
- Committee Hearing Schedules
- Listen to daily legislative session

And much more.

How to find your Representatives:

You can find you State and Federal Officials at either [here](#), the General Assembly website, "Voice my opinion" or at mdelect.net. Just fill in your address and zip code, hit enter, and your representatives will be shown.

From these screens you can click on any of their names and be taken to a page where you have access to contact information, legislation and committee assignment.

To locate your County Councilman, visit [here](#) and enter your address information.

How to research a bill on the GA Website:

If you know the bill number, you can enter in the bill number on the General Assembly website in “Find Legislation by number.” To look up House Bill 1, Family Law – Child Conceived Without Consent – Termination of Parental Rights, you would enter “hb1”.

This brings up the summary page for the bill where you can find its status, the fiscal note, and under documents you can find the voting records when it is voted on.

To find the complete language of the bill, click on the “HB001” in the right corner.

Delegate Scholarships

It is time to submit your scholarship application for the 2018-2019 academic year. The application is on my website, just print it, complete the application, include your transcripts and essay, sign and mail to my office.

The deadline for applications is March 31st. The awards are made in mid-May, usually in time for the High School Award ceremony. The Delegate Scholarships are one year awards, therefore you need to apply every year you need funding.

Click [Here](#) to access additional scholarship information.

Office Information

My office is staffed by Nancy Lipin Crawford, my Chief of Staff, and Stefan Specian, my Legislative Assistant.

My office is open full time during the Session. Please feel free to contact me with your thoughts and concerns. My contact information remains: pamela.beidle@house.state.md.us or 410.841.3370. You can also find updates at my website www.pambeidle.com and on Facebook at Delegate Pam Beidle.

It is truly an honor to serve you in the Maryland General Assembly.