

Sine Die

The General Assembly came to an end on April 10th at midnight. Over 2,800 bills were filed this year; 1,199 Senate Bills, 1,661 House Bills and 19 Joint Resolutions. The Governor is pleased with his agenda that passed the House and the Senate. The House and the Senate are pleased with the bills that passed. In my eleven sessions here in the legislature this is the most productive session I have experienced.

The Environment and Transportation Committee heard more bills than any other committee, my Subcommittee on Transportation reviewed over 90 bills prior to the Senate Bills crossing over. The Committee process is where the majority of the work is done, hearing testimony, creating amendments and studying the bills. Bills are heard in full Committee and then discussed in sub-committee, the sub-committee makes its recommendation to the full committee where the bill is then voted "Favorable or Unfavorable". It is important that you contact your representatives early in the process to let us know your position on a bill.

The Governor will schedule several bill signings over the next few weeks. (See his [website](#) for the schedule.)

Anne Arundel County Bills

[HB 85](#), Anne Arundel County - Charitable Gaming. This delegation bill authorizing a nonprofit foundation that provides support to the work and people of Fort Meade; or a Chamber of Commerce located within Anne Arundel County to conduct a "Casino Night" under specified circumstances; requiring an organization to obtain a permit from the County Department of Inspections and Permits for one event per year; requiring a participant in specified gaming events to be at least 21 years of age.

[HB 695](#), Anne Arundel County - Property Tax - Payment in Lieu of Taxes Agreements - Economic Development Projects. This Delegation bill is enabling legislation that permits the County to provide a credit in lieu of taxes to an entity that will build a facility for use by the county, specifically high school graduations. Its effective date is July 1, 2017.

[HB 716](#), Anne Arundel County - Board of Education. This Delegation bill restructures the Anne Arundel County Board of Education from a nine-member appointed board to an eight-member elected board consisting of seven elected members (one from each of the seven councilmanic districts on a nonpartisan basis) and one student member. Its effective date is June 1, 2017.

[HB 1269](#), Anne Arundel County - Property Tax - Credit for Seniors of Limited Income. This bill authorizes Anne Arundel County and municipalities in Anne Arundel County to grant, by law, a property tax credit for real property owned and used as the principal residence of an individual who is at least 62 years old and of limited income. The bill takes effect June 1, 2017, and applies to taxable years beginning after June 30, 2017.

[SB 77](#), Anne Arundel County and Harford County - Courthouse Dog and Child Witness Pilot Program. This bill expands the Court house dog and Child witness pilot program-for children who appear as witnesses in civil as well as criminal cases to have a "facility" or "therapy" dog accompany them.

Environment

The Environment Community had a very good year. They were pleased to see the Legislature finally pass a total ban on fracking, we passed legislation to protect the "pollinators" (bees) and we protected

the oyster sanctuaries while waiting for the final report from the Oyster Advisory Commission. Both the House and the Senate passed a resolution to oppose cuts in federal funding for the Chesapeake Bay restoration efforts. I am very pleased to serve on the Environment and Transportation Committee and be a small part of this important work.

[HB 1325](#), Oil and Natural Gas - Hydraulic Fracturing – Prohibition. The General Assembly passed, and the Governor signed House Bill 1325, an outright ban on fracking in Maryland. Each fracking well can pump over 5 million gallons of water into the ground and contains 600 unknown chemicals. This bipartisan legislation will protect public health and drinking water across the State. We listened to many area residents regarding the hazards of this practice and how it would cause a loss of jobs and tourist travel.

[SB 158](#), Maryland Oil Disaster Containment, Clean-Up and Contingency Fund and Oil Contaminated Site Environmental Cleanup Fund. This bill extends the current fee (8.0 cents per barrel) assessed on oil transferred into the State until July 1, 2019. The bill allows owners of heating oil tanks to continue to apply for assistance from the Reimbursement Fund. The Reimbursement Fund was established in 1993 to reimburse underground storage tank owners for costs incurred during site cleanups.

- eligible owners and operators may apply to the fund for reimbursement for costs incurred in performing site rehabilitation after specified dates;
- residential owners of heating oil tanks are subject to a deductible of \$1,000; and
- the maximum amount to be reimbursed for heating oil tanks is \$10,000 per occurrence.

Heroin Addiction Legislation

The 'HOPE Act' and 'Start Talking Maryland' legislation provide a comprehensive approach to combating the opioid/heroin epidemic. These two bills are a product of the House Opioid Workgroup, a bipartisan group that combined several bills that focus on awareness, treatment and prevention:

[HB 1329](#), [SB 967](#), Heroin and Opioid Prevention Effort (HOPE) and Treatment Act of 2017:

- Establishes crisis treatment centers around the state.
- Increases buprenorphine prescribers
- Requires medical schools to offer credited courses that deal with substance abuse disorders, treatment and pain management

[HB 1082](#), [SB 1060](#), Heroin and Opioid Education and Community Action Act of 2017 (Start Talking Maryland Act):

- Creates grant program to expand scope of drug courts
- Increases funding for specialized heroin/opioid education in public schools
- Requires Colleges/Universities to provide awareness training to incoming students, expand the availability naloxone (overdose reversal medication) on campuses and train campus police in overdose response

Transportation Bills

[HB402/SB307](#), Repeal of the Maryland Open Transportation Investment Decision Act of 2016. This was the Governor's bill to repeal the Transportation Transparency Bill, that he named the "Road Kill Bill." This administration bill was passed with amendments allowing the Maryland Department of Transportation additional time to create a scoring model for our major transportation projects. The model must be completed by January 1, 2018 and the model must be evaluated by January 1, 2019.

[HB 406, Clean Cars Act of 2017](#). This Administration bill extends through fiscal 2020 the termination dates of the qualified plug-in electric vehicle excise tax credit and the Electric Vehicle Recharging Equipment Rebate Program. The bill increases the annual maximum amount of incentives available in each fiscal year and alters certain eligibility requirements. The bill takes effect July 1, 2017. I supported it.

[HB 271, Maryland Transit Administration - Farebox Recovery Rate - Repeal](#). Maryland has had requirement that MTA must meet 35% of fare box recovery in the operation of our mass transit systems, that is the Light Rail, Subway, Baltimore Link (buses) and the Marc Train. Some modes of transportation exceed 35%, like the MARC Train, other modes at as low as 18% like the light rail. Other major cities do not have the fare box recovery requirement and this requirement was impacting the quality of our mass transit. We need to invest in our buses, light rail and subway to keep our vehicles safe and clean to have the proper law enforcement and officers to check for tickets.

[SB 154, School Bus Monitoring Cameras - Civil Penalty](#). This bill was heard and passed by my sub-committee and committee. Currently there are four counties that have school buses equipped with cameras that monitor vehicles running stopped school buses with blinking lights, in violation of the law. Personally I am not a fan of cameras for civil penalties, but Montgomery County has an horrific problem with drivers passing stopped school buses. They have 100 buses equipped with cameras and they are issuing 75 tickets a day. In the first 100 school days of this year they issued 7500 tickets! Just a reminder, please respect stopped school buses and keep our children safe.

Women's Issues

[HB 255, SB 349-Criminal Procedure - Sexual Assault Victims' Rights - Disposal of Rape Kit Evidence and Notification](#). The Attorney General reported in December that Maryland had 3,700 untested rape kits, with many more never recorded at all. House Bill 255 establishes a statewide standard of handling sexual assault evidence to ensure rape kits are properly tested and stored so victims aren't treated differently because of their ZIP code.

[HB 429, SB 217- Criminal Law - Sexual Offenses - Physical Resistance](#). This bill, sometimes referred to as the "No means No Bill", specifies that evidence of physical resistance by the victim is not required to prove that a crime was committed. This legislation is expected to be signed by the Governor.

[HB 642, Civil Actions - Child Sexual Abuse - Statute of Limitations and Required Findings](#). This bill expands the statute of limitations in cases of sexual abuse when the victim was a minor. Maryland joins 45 states allowing a victim to seek damages through civil actions well into adulthood. The Governor has signed this bill into law.

[HB 1083, Health - Family Planning Services - Continuity of Care](#). This bill establishes a Family Planning Program in the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to ensure the continuity of family planning services in the State should the Federal budget reduce that funding and terminate these services. This act is subject to the extent permitted by the State Budget.

Other Bills of Interest

[HB 1, Labor and Employment - Maryland Healthy Working Families Act](#). This bill requires an employer with more than 14 employees to have a sick and safe leave policy under which an employee earns at least five days of sick time a year. The Senate amended the bill to require an employee to work 12 hours

per week and be on the payroll for 106 days to qualify. I supported the bill and it will take effect January 1, 2018. PASSED. The Governor is expected to vetoed this bill.

[HB 100](#), Income Tax Subtraction Modification - Retirement Income of Law Enforcement, Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Services Personnel (Hometown Heroes). This bill is bipartisan legislation that provides a \$15,000 income tax deduction on the retirement income of thousands of law enforcement, fire, rescue, and EMS personnel who are 55 years and older. It PASSED both chambers unanimously.

[HB 631](#), Public Health - Essential Off-Patent or Generic Drugs - Price Gouging – Prohibition. This bill authorizes the Attorney General to prevent the prescription drug price gouging of off-patent drugs. The legislation would help the Attorney General investigate why the prices for certain drugs skyrocket and would force pharmaceutical companies to the table to justify those increases.

[HB 879](#), Public Integrity Act of 2017. Speaker Busch and Governor Hogan each introduced legislation to strengthen our public disclosure laws and tighten conflict of interest provisions governing elected officials. The House merged those bills in to The Public Integrity Act of 2017, which increases transparency for elected officials disclosure forms; requires lobbyists to provide more information about their clients; prohibits elected officials from lobbying in front of government entities on personal matters; requires a cooling-off period for more categories of elected officials than under current law; and establishes a Citizen Advisory Board to increase input with the Legislative Joint Ethics Committee on existing ethics laws.

[HB 978](#), Education - Accountability - Consolidated State Plan and Support and Improvement Plans (Protect Our Schools Act of 2017). This bill establishes parameters about how to implement the Federal Every Student Succeeds Act, while giving the State Board of Education discretion on the implementation of the details. The bill prohibits the State Board from making test results count for 100% of the assessment of school progress. It also blocks the privatization of our public schools, by preventing the transfer of operations to private and for-profit interests who look out for their bottom lines first and our kids second. I supported the bill; it will take effect July 1, 2017. The Governor vetoed this bill and the veto was overridden by the General Assembly.

[HB 1283](#), Alcoholic Beverages - Class 5 Brewery License. This bill significantly increases the amount of beer that all of Maryland's breweries can serve on-premises in their taprooms and allows Guinness to open their only brewery in the United States right here in Baltimore County. The bill also allows Maryland's breweries to keep their existing operating hours, provides them with the flexibility to innovate and continue to grow.

[HB 1443](#), Natalie M. LaPrade Medical Cannabis Commission Reform Act. Speaker Busch created a bipartisan workgroup on medical cannabis to award five grower and processor licenses according to the results of a disparity study on race and gender. The House legislation also changed the makeup of the Medical Cannabis Commission and created a compassionate use fund for low-income patients to access this alternative medicine. Unfortunately the Senate did not pass the House bill. The bill died in debate at midnight on Sine Die.

[HB 1463](#), Veterinary Practitioners - Animal Cruelty and Animal Fighting – Reporting. This bill requires a veterinarian to report in a timely manner (1) any suspected animal cruelty or (2) any involvement in animal fighting by any animal treated by the veterinarian, to the appropriate law enforcement or county animal control agency.

[SB 1023](#), Independent Congressional Redistricting Open-Mid-Atlantic States Regional Districting

Process. This bill creates a Mid-Atlantic Regional Compact with New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina for bipartisan redistricting. If all 6 states act together to create similar independent, nonpartisan redistricting commissions, it will remove the partisan wrangling over redistricting reform and send a message to Congress and the rest of the country.

Study Bills

[HB 192](#), Task Force to Study Bicycle Safety on Maryland Highways. This bill creates a formal Task Force to Study Bicycle Safety on Maryland Highways. The Task Force will be appointed by the Governor. Members will include elected officials, State Police, bicycle advocates, Chiefs of Police, AAA, planners and engineers.

[HB 1520](#), Personal Motor Vehicle Rentals. I learned that some people rent their personal vehicles through an internet platform. One such system is called TURO. <https://turo.com> We did not pass legislation to regulate this industry, but we had a great deal of questions. There will be a “summer study” to decide if regulation is needed. There are legal issues, safety issues, and insurance issues to resolve. I will be chairing the summer study.

Community News

Anne Arundel County Launches 3-1-1 Customer Service Program. Anne Arundel County has announced the launch of 3-1-1, a new initiative that will make customer service more efficient and responsive. Citizens can access the new system by simply dialing 3-1-1 for all municipal services. Operators are available from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Please dial 9-1-1 for emergencies and medical assistance.

Citizens can also download the mobile app through the App Store (iPhone) and Google Play (Android). Only a simple signup process is required. Just hit the magnifying glass and search for “Arundel 311.”

The mobile platform, through the See-Click-Fix application, allows citizens to report a lost pet, a pothole, a missed trash collection and many other issues. Using your mobile device, you can take a picture, set a location, and receive updates on the response to your issue.

Delegate Scholarships

Scholarships are closed, the deadline was March 31st. We received 88 applications, currently my Scholarship Committee is busy reviewing the applications so the awards can be made in time for the High School Award ceremonies.

In Closing

As the session ends, my office will return to part-time status. My office will usually be open on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9 am to 4 pm. My contact information remains the same, pamela.beidle@house.state.md.us or 410-841-3370. I look forward to seeing you out and about in the Community. A special thanks to my Legislative Aide, Nancy Lipin Crawford and my Legislative Assistant, Maggie Hobbins for your help and support during the 2017 Session.

Thank you for granting me the honor and opportunity to serve as your representative in the Maryland House of Delegates. I truly appreciate your support and I look forward to seeing in the community.

