

Operating Budget

The Maryland State Operating Budget and Capital Budget passed the House and the Senate in a very non-partisan vote.

The final Operating Budget, SB 185, passed in the Senate unanimously! Every Senator voted for the Operating Budget; and the House voted 126 in favor and 8 opposed.

The Capital Budget, SB 186, passed the Senate, 45 in favor and one opposed; and the House passed the Capital Budget 126 in favor and 4 opposed.

The final piece of the Budget is the Budget Reconciliation Act (BERFA) SB 187 passed the Senate Unanimously but the House voted 101 in favor and 37 opposed. This was still a non-partisan vote. The interesting thing is if you vote for the Budget and you do not vote for the BERFA, the budget cannot be effective. The BERFA is how all the transfers in the Budget need to be made to make the Budget operable.

It is always good to pass a Budget where the majority of both parties come agreement.

Highlights

Some of the good things that happened in the Budget this year, there is \$200,000 million of fund balance and also \$161 million surplus for the structural deficit.

School Safety initiatives, a priority of the Governor and the Legislators, will receive \$41 million dollars. \$30 million will be for structural changes, like security systems, cameras, bullet proof glass and \$10 million will be managed by the State School Board for wellness issues, like adding counselors where needed for troubled students.

Transportation

The Budget includes \$167 million for WMARTA for the safety improvements that are needed by the Metro system; Virginia and Washington DC are also contributing.

The MTA will get a 4.4% operating year increase. I hope it will be used for increased public safety on the Light Rail, including more law enforcement and uniformed staff to check for fare evaders!

The Counties and Cities will receive a much needed increase in highway user funds for local road improvements.

Tax Reform

The General Assembly does not yet know the full ramifications of the Federal Tax Reform on Maryland revenues; however \$1.2 Billion of personal exemptions were restored and the Standard Deduction was indexed to the CPI.

Opioid Epidemic, the Behavioral Health Crises Response Grant Program is expected to receive \$12 million to address local needs.

Hometown Heroes and Veterans Act SB996 is expected to pass. This bill expands the existing military retirement income tax subtraction modification by increasing from \$10,000 to \$15,000 the maximum amount of retirement income that can be excluded from Maryland adjusted gross income for purposes of calculating Maryland income tax liability. The individual must be at least 55 years old. The bill also expands the existing State subtraction modification for retired law enforcement, fire, rescue, and emergency services personnel by extending eligibility to correctional officers.

Capital Budget Projects

The Statewide requests for Capital projects were \$64 million. Anne Arundel County did get their share of Capital projects this year. County projects include:

ARC of Central Chesapeake Region	\$475,000
Broadneck HS Stadium	\$1.5 million
Girl Scout Camp Woodlands	\$250,000
Glen Burnie HS Field House & Athletic Complex	\$1.5 million
Resiliency & Education Ctr Kuhn Hall	\$250,000
Severn Danza Park	\$200,000
St. Philip Neri Community Hall	\$ 75,000
William Brown House at Londontown	\$250,000
YWCA Domestic Violence and Trafficking Shelter	\$1 million

As we finish the final 12 days, we will be busy passing bills from the House to the Senate and the Senate Bills in the House. Sine Die (the end of the session) is midnight on April 9.

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 House of Delegates.