

March 15, 2012

One more week to “crossover,” and the House is working hard to get our bills passed and over to the Senate for action. Three of my bills passed the House, and I hope two more will move out of committee and to the House Floor for a vote. I am withdrawing the Common Property Managers Bill, the Senate Committee voted against the Senate crossfiled bill before the amendments were available. We should be voting on the Moped Licensing Bill this week and I expect it will have significant amendments made to it. You can find updates on all my bills at: <http://mlis.state.md.us/2012rs/sponsors/beidle.htm>.

## Budget

The Senate passed the second reader on the budget, and it is expected that it will pass third reader on Thursday, and then the budget package will pass to the House for action. The Senate package includes a proposed income tax increase for “high earners”. Many members of the House, including me, continue to support “cuts” and not tax increases.

Yesterday, March 14, 2012, my committee Environmental Matters had a joint hearing with the Ways and Means Committee on the Governors Gas Tax Bill. HB1302, Maryland Transportation Financing and Infrastructure Investment Act of 2012, is the proposal to add sales tax to the purchase price of gas. The tax would be added over a three year period, 2 percent each year. If the price of gas increases more than 15% in any one year, the tax will not be increased that year. The funds cannot be diverted to the General Funds unless approved by the Governor and a vote of the General Assembly. In the first year, this new tax is expected to raise 211 million dollars and create more than 600 jobs. A percentage of the revenues would go back to local governments. While I understand the importance of maintaining the roads and bridges, in my opinion, this is not the time to increase taxes on gas. If you feel differently, I hope you will take a minute to email me and share your thoughts.

## Noteworthy Crimefighting Legislation

We are voting on more than just the budget, here are a few bills that we passed this week that you may find interesting:

- HB349 doubles the statute of limitations from 1 to 2 years for misdemeanor possession of child pornography including film, videotape, photos or other representations of children under 16. There were 29 convictions for misdemeanor possession of child pornography in the circuit courts in fiscal 2011.
- HB398 gives law enforcement additional electronic surveillance tools in order to investigate cases of felony theft schemes if authorized by a judge. Current law provides for the use of electronic wiretapping for violent felonies, child abuse and other serious crimes. According to the *2010 Uniform Crime Report*, 118,583 thefts (larceny) and 18,029 motor vehicle thefts were reported in the State during 2010.
- HB2 requires parents or custodians to report a child under the age of 13 missing within the first 24 hours. Commonly known as Caylee’s law, violators would be guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to imprisonment for up to 3 years. The bill also requires a parent/guardian to report the

death of a child within 5 hours of learning of the death. Timely reporting of missing or dead children is an important factor in locating these children and bringing their attackers to justice.

- HB211 requires a state or local elected official who is found guilty of a felony or certain misdemeanors be suspended and, in some cases, immediately removed from office. This represents a strong step forward in restoring the public's confidence in their elected officials.

Hopefully next week I will be writing to you about our final budget solution.

Thank you for allowing me the honor to represent the constituents of District 32. Please continue to stay in touch. My contact information is:

Pamela.beidle@house.state.md.us or (410)841-3370. Also, please visit [www.pambeidle.com](http://www.pambeidle.com) to take part in my current poll on the Gas Tax proposal or my facebook page for more frequent updates, just search Delegate Pam Beidle: