

Session 2012

The 2012 Legislative Session begins on Wednesday, January 11, 2012 at noon. This year is forecasted to be busier than most with many important and significant issues.

The Budget

The budget deficient continues to get headlines; the Spending Affordability Committee has recommended that the Governor's Proposed Budget eliminate one-half of the billion dollars deficient. If the Governor's Budget does not reflect these cuts, I am certain that the Appropriations Committee will recommend the cuts.

Legislative Redistricting

The Governor will introduce his plan on the first day of session, we will have 45 days to approve, or amend and approve the redistricting plan. You can see the redistricting plan at the Maryland Department of Planning website:
<http://www.mdp.state.md.us/redistricting/>

Taxes

The tax on cigarettes has continuously risen during the past decade resulting in the number of smokers in Maryland declining. The tax on cigars however has not risen and the result has been that many more young people are smoking cigars. According to the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the number of teens smoking cigars is nearly the same as teen smoking cigarettes; therefore I expect to see a proposal to raise the tax on cigars.

As the media has reported, there will certainly be a discussion regarding an increase in the gas tax. **I do not support an increase in the gas tax considering the current price of gas.** This hurts all of us at the pumps, and gravely affects many of our businesses that depend on gas for transportation of their products and services.

Marriage Equality

A marriage equality bill will surely be introduced again this year. With such a busy legislative year, I am hoping that this issue will not over power the legislature as it did last year. Please watch for a poll that I will post later in the session on my website.

Gambling in Maryland

There will be bills to expand gambling in Maryland. An effort will be made to add table games to our casino operations and to add another location in Prince Georges County.

My Committee

I continue to serve on the Environmental Matters Committee and once again I expect we will be the busiest committee in the House. Some of the important, controversial, legislative topics will be:

- the continuing rise of Lead Paint poisoning
- Ground Rent, due to a recent court ruling

- the licensing of mopeds, including helmets for the riders
- a implementation of a “bottle tax”
- implementation of a “plastic bag tax”
- Septic Systems including the possibility of limiting new Septic Systems
- “fracking” for gas in Western Maryland
- Wind turbines for electric production
- An increase in the “Flush Tax” to be returned to the counties for sewer upgrades and stormwater retro fit.

My Bills

I have already worked on a number of bills concerning common interest properties, that is, condominium law and homeowner’s association law. I will be the primary sponsor on a bill to license and regulate property managers, a bill that will create a dispute resolution process in HOA’s that do not have a process, a bill to enable counties to give a tax credit to builders that produce “green” homes, and several other common interest properties bills. I will also introduce two bond bills, one for the YWCA and one for the Hospice of the Chesapeake.

Please continue to stay in touch with my office. Contact us by phone (410)841-3370, FAX (410)841-3347 or by email, Pamela.beidle@house.state.md.us. Also, please monitor my website: www.pambeidle.com for updates and friend me on facebook - “Delegate Pam Beidle.” where I will post, more frequent, brief updates. Nancy Crawford continues to be my Legislative Aide and this year Julia - a student from University of Maryland, will be helping us in her position as Legislative Intern.

It is always an honor to serve you as your representative in the Maryland House of Delegates.