

Bob Cassilly, State Senator (District 34 - Harford County)



February 28, 2016

Dear Harford County Neighbor,

Thank you for reading my weekly newsletter, a tool that I hope will keep you updated on my legislative work in Annapolis.

Over the next few weeks, the General Assembly will be considering a number of bills that are intended to take away powers belonging to Governor Hogan. Now in his second year in office, the Governor remains very popular with Maryland voters. It appears that, for purely political gains, some legislators want to do everything they can to clip the Governor's wings. Fortunately, the Maryland Constitution was designed to limit this sort of extreme political gamesmanship and the inevitable harm it would cause to good governance.

The framers of the Maryland Constitution, like the framers of the United States Constitution, understood that the best way to prevent one branch of government from becoming too dominant is to divide power between three branches. That is why Article Eight of the Maryland Declaration of Rights requires that "the Legislative, Executive and Judicial powers of Government ought to be forever separate and distinct from each other; and no person exercising the functions of one of said Departments shall assume or discharge the duties of any other."

As the Senate debates the various efforts underway to reduce Governor Hogan's executive powers, I have taken and will continue to take a firm stance that the Legislature adhere to the Article Eight prohibitions. Just this week, I challenged on the Senate floor the constitutionality of a bill that would have required Governor Hogan's State Board of Education members to get the Senate's permission before hiring our State Schools Superintendent. Board members are already approved with the Senate's advice and consent. Requiring these Board members to get permission from the Senate before exercising their lawful executive authority to choose the State School Superintendent is an unconstitutional intrusion into the Governor's executive powers. While the sponsors maintained the bill's constitutionality, they did remove it from the floor and it will likely die.

There are several more bills still winding through the legislative process that seek to interfere with Governor Hogan's executive powers. Bills still being debated would restrict Governor Hogan's authority to make executive appointments, limit his authority to direct transportation funds, and further limit his authority to control the State budget. I will continue to work to defend Maryland's constitutional safeguards on the separation of powers. Where possible, I will work with my Senate colleagues to kill bad legislation. Where necessary, I will stand firm on my oath to uphold Maryland's constitution.

Again, thank you for reading my newsletter. I appreciate hearing your thoughts about what our state government is doing. You can reach me at 410-841-3158, or at Bob.Cassilly@senate.state.md.us. My legislative office is located on 11 Bladen Street; Room 321, James Office Building; Annapolis, MD 21401. Please stop by next time you're in the area—if I'm not on the Senate floor, I'd like to catch up.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bob", with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

Sen. Bob Cassilly

Maryland Senate District 34

Harford County

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Authority: Citizens for Bob Cassilly
Kevin Greenwell, Treasurer