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*Legislative District 30*  
Anne Arundel County

Budget and Taxation Committee

*Subcommittees*

Capital Budget

Education, Business and Administration

*Pensions*

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**THE SENATE OF MARYLAND**  
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Dear Neighbor,

I want to take a moment to thank you for the opportunity to represent the 30th District - I have loved every minute of my first session and it has truly been the honor of my life to serve our community. I especially appreciate every person who visited the office or shared their ideas or concerns over the last 90 days. With the help of my talented team, I have responded to over 1,000 constituent inquiries this session alone.

It is with a heavy heart that we said goodbye to Maryland's Speaker, our Delegate, Mike Busch this session. It is impossible to put into words the impact Mike had on our community, Maryland, and the hundreds of members of the General Assembly who had the privilege to serve with him.

In this letter you will find a comprehensive update of the accomplishments of the General Assembly and how they will affect our community and Maryland. I am also excited to share the initiatives and wins that your District 30 team achieved on behalf of our community.

**Your District 30 Team**



In memory of Speaker Michael Erin Busch. Maryland's Speaker, Our Delegate.  
Delegate Alice Cain and I will continue to carry on the mantle for our communities and to honor the memory and legacy  
of Mike Busch.

Speaker Mike Busch dedicated his final session to passing legislation to permanently protect Maryland's largest oyster sanctuaries, bring accountability and oversight to the University of Maryland Medical System, and secure permanent state funding for the City of Annapolis.

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Delegate Alice Cain had a great first session as well. Her bill to expand environmental education opportunities for Maryland students is on Governor Hogan's desk awaiting his signature. Four of her amendments were added to the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, landmark legislation designed to build world-class public schools for all students. Particularly noteworthy is her amendment to make it easier for high school students to earn college credits at no cost while still in high school through "early college" programs. Delegate Cain was also instrumental in enacting a major new anti-human trafficking law.

### **Legislative Victories**

I introduced nine bills this session and am thrilled to report that, with significant assistance in the House from Speaker Mike Busch, the following eight bills passed with bipartisan support:

**Senate Bill 99 – Agritourism:** This bipartisan bill enables Anne Arundel County to update permitting requirements in order to help local farmers tap into agritourism opportunities, diversify their revenues, and stimulate the local economy. We also met with the Anne Arundel County Fire Marshall and representatives from the Anne Arundel County Council to work through fire and life safety concerns. The bill received the full support of the Anne Arundel Delegation. Now, the County Council must pass legislation enabling farmers to take advantage of this opportunity.

**Senate Bill 156 – Mandatory Appropriation to the City of Annapolis:** The City of Annapolis is proud to host the State capital and other state governmental agencies; however because of that, Annapolis incurs costs that other small municipalities are not subject to. Championed by Speaker Mike Busch and Delegate Alice Cain, this bill requires the State to increase its Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) to the City of Annapolis to \$750,000 a year to help pay for the essential fire and police services needed to protect our State agencies. Annapolis will be able to access this additional funding next fiscal year.

**Senate Bill 396 – Legal Representation Fund for Title IX Proceedings:** 1 in 5 women and 1 in 16 men will experience sexual assault while in college. This bill creates a modest fund for college students to be able to use to pay for attorneys and other related fees during Title IX proceedings in college, so all students are able to pursue justice.

**Senate Bill 505 – Environmental Violations Reporting Requirements:** 2018 was the rainiest year on record, and with the ever-increasing amount of development it is critical that sediment erosion violations are being properly tracked. This bill requires the Maryland Department of the Environment to collect and publish user-friendly data on environmental violations.

**Senate Bill 569 – Rape Kit Testing Grant Fund:** According to the National Institute of Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, approximately one in five women and one in seventy-one men have experienced a completed or attempted rape. Despite the prevalence of this crime, the vast majority of perpetrators are never arrested or prosecuted, due to the thousands of untested rape kits in Maryland. This bill creates a grant fund to distribute money to local police jurisdictions to ensure the proper testing of rape kits.

**Senate Bill 719 – University System of Maryland Board of Regents Transparency and Oversight:** When the Board makes missteps that lead to a breakdown in that public trust, as it did last fall, the General Assembly has an obligation to step in. This bill requires more accountability and transparency from the Board in governing our higher education system by implementing a wide array of reforms, including: requiring the vote totals and motions to be provided in publicly available meeting minutes, requiring the livestreaming of the Board meetings, requiring the ability for public comment in the meetings, requiring the Chair of the Board to be confirmed by the Senate, and more.

**Senate Bill 830 – Natural Resources – Fisheries Management Plans – Oysters:** This bill represents a true compromise that brought watermen, environmental groups, and a bipartisan group of legislators to the table. It is the best example of stakeholder-led, consensus-driven legislation we can put forward to solve a generations-old challenge to save one of Maryland's greatest natural resources: the Eastern Oyster. Senate Bill 830 will take the politics out of oyster restoration by using a professional facilitator and consensus-building tactics to bring watermen and scientists to the table and determine a Fisheries Management Plan that benefits everyone and restores one of our greatest natural resources.

**Senate Joint Resolution 2 – Freedom of the Press Day:** The resolution seeks to honor the victims of The Capital Gazette shooting, and all of those who continue to ensure that our fundamental first amendment right is protected by declaring June 28th "Freedom of the Press Day" in Maryland.

## **Full Session Update: Maryland General Assembly**

The General Assembly saw 2,481 pieces of legislation introduced in the 2019 session. Together and in a largely bipartisan manner, we made great strides to protect our environment, invest in schools, keep the cost of healthcare down, and improve public safety. I would be remiss, however, to not point out two bills that did not pass this session that I pledge to work on throughout the 9-month interim and help to champion in January: raising the age of child marriage and passing common-sense regulations on long-guns.

### **Strengthening Our Schools**

#### **Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education / Blueprint for Maryland's Future**

Building the best public schools in the world is not only our obligation to the next generation, but the best investment we can make. Senate Bill 1030 - "Blueprint for Maryland's Future" seeks to update Maryland's instruction and career and technical development education to enable our students to be success in the 21st century economy, address the opportunity gap to raise the success of all students, and ensure high quality and diverse teachers and school leaders to meet the needs of our schools and communities. In order to do so, the Maryland General Assembly has added more than \$1 billion in education funding over the next 3 years, including funding for the Kirwan Commission's initial recommendations:

- ✓ \$31.7 million full-day pre-k for low-income families
- ✓ \$65.6 million additional funding for special education
- ✓ \$75 million to increase educator salaries
- ✓ \$54 million for schools in areas of concentrated poverty
- ✓ \$23 million to help children who are falling behind in elementary school
- ✓ \$2 million for mental health coordinators

Early intervention for learning difficulties is key to ensuring that a student can receive the appropriate services to help them succeed in school. SB 734 Students with Reading Difficulties - Screenings and Interventions requires every local board of education to to develop a plan to screen for reading difficulties when a student is enrolled in their school system.

### **Creating Safer Communities**

### **Protecting Our Environment**

#### **Moving into a sustainable future**

Maryland continues to be a leader in addressing climate change and investing in the innovation economy through SB516 The Clean Energy Jobs Act sponsored by Senator Feldman. This legislation will double the state's Renewable Portfolio Standards by 2030 by requiring the state's electric utilities to get 50% of their energy through renewable sources. Not only will this bill reduce our carbon footprint, but it also created the Clean Energy Workforce Account which will provide grants towards workforce development to give our residents the skills needed to succeed and thrive in a greener economy - one focused on solar, wind, and other alternative energy sources.

#### **Banning harmful Polystyrene containers**

This year, Maryland became the first state in the nation to ban the use of expanded polystyrene containers from use in food and restaurants in order to protect our environment through SB 285 - Expanded Polystyrene Food Service Products - Prohibitions sponsored by Sen. Cheryl Kagan. These non-biodegradable containers end up in our waterways and the Chesapeake Bay, or eaten by our wildlife, sickening them and our environment. Senate Bill 285 protects our beautiful outdoors and climate for future generations.

#### **Protecting our forests and trees**

The "fee in lieu" system is a foundational component to Maryland's Forest Conservation Act, allowing developers to pay jurisdictions to complete the reforestation obligation for new development - allowing for larger tracts

### Protecting victims of sexual assault

Currently under Maryland law the victim of a sexual assault can only receive a protective order against their attacker if a judge determines the assailant is likely to commit the act again in the future. SB 209 Peace Order - Relief Eligibility and Duration - Rape and Sexual offenses removes that requirement and allows victims of sexual assault to seek a protective order regardless of the potential future intentions of their attacker. Unfortunately, this bill was not passed before adjournment on Sine Die.

### Better Regulations on Rifles and Shotguns

After the tragic shooting at the Capital last year, it became clear that the state should look at the current process for obtaining rifles and long guns. SB 737 Public Safety - Rifles and Shotguns - Sales, Rentals, Transfers and Loans would have established rules and regulations for the sale and transfer of rifles and shotguns between private individuals, similar to requirements for the sale and transfer of handguns. The bill would have required that a background check be conducted before a firearm can be sold to another person, without impeding the ability of people to loan a gun to somebody as long as they did not know or should have known that the person was prohibited from handling a gun. Unfortunately, this bill failed to pass before adjournment on Sine Die.

### Keeping Concealed Carry Weapons Off Our Streets

The Handgun Review Board was initially set up to provide an avenue for appeals of decisions by the State Police on whether or not to issue someone a concealed carry permit. For many years the board worked as intended, but unfortunately the Board has become increasingly politicized in the past two years, with more than 90% of state police decisions overturned, making it easier for individuals to carry firearms on our streets. Under SB 1000 Public Safety - Handgun Permit Review Board - Repeal, sponsored by Senator Pam Beidle, the Handgun Review board will be abolished and appeals will instead be heard by Administrative Law Judges, similar to the appeals process for other boards and departments.

### Protecting children from online harassment

While the internet has opened a world of learning and possibility for our children across Maryland, it has also created a new avenue where bullying can infect every aspect of a child's life. We have an obligation to protect our children from online bullying and harassment. SB 103 Criminal Law - Electronic Harassment and Bullying (Grace's Law 2.0) enhances existing protections for children online by expanding the definition of online

of contiguous forests in appropriate areas. SB234 Natural Resources - State and Local Forest Conservation Funds fixed problems with the program through increased accountability and transparency.

In order to understand the scale of deforestation in Maryland and the source of the problem, SB729 Technical Study on Changes in Forest Cover and Tree Canopy in Maryland gathers a diverse group of stakeholders to study deforestation patterns and make recommendations to offset forest loss.

### Investing in Health Care

#### Restoring prescription drug benefits for retirees

In the 2011 session, the Maryland General Assembly passed the benefit sustainability reform which had the unintended consequence of shifting the prescription drug benefits enjoyed by Medicare eligible retirees to Medicare Part-D and leaving a number of retirees uncovered. This General Assembly saw giving relief to those affected as a top priority - which is why we unanimously passed SB 946 State Prescription Drug Benefits - Retiree Benefits - Revisions sponsored by Sen. Griffith.

This bill created new State plans that will cap the out-of-pocket limits for prescription drug costs for retirees to \$1,500, the same as current State employees. The current Medicare Part-D plans offered to eligible retirees has 25 options available on the Maryland Health Exchanges from 10 different providers. Assistance will be made widely available to those needing guidance in selecting the best plan for them.

#### Keeping prescription drugs affordable

The cost of prescription drugs have risen year after year, making it harder and harder for people to afford life-saving medications due to these skyrocketing costs. In the richest state in the richest country in the world, no one should die because they can't afford their prescription prices. SB 759 Prescription Drug Affordability Board created a board to review the cost of prescription drugs and increases in their prices, as well as look at the best ways to bring down the cost of prescription drugs including bulk purchasing, upper payment limits, reverse auctions, and more. This board will have the power to recommend upper payment limits on the price of prescription drugs to help keep the costs of these medications at a level where the people who need them the most can afford them, though they will need approval before they can move forward with implementation of Upper Payment Limits for State government.

### Supporting Working Families

bullying and increases the penalties on those individuals that use the internet to bully someone else.

#### Updating our Emergency Services

Maryland's 9-1-1 system is based on 50 year old technology and has not kept up with improvements in how we communicate every day. SB 339 Public Safety 9-1-1 Emergency Telephone System would bring Next Generation 9-1-1 to Maryland. To help pay for these new services Maryland will expand the collection of the mandatory 9-1-1 fee that is currently paid by consumers. Currently, a single fee is applied to each telephone bill regardless of how many phone numbers are associated with that account, under SB 339 that fee would be raised by \$.25 and would be charged to each unique phone number on a telephone bill.

#### Combating Hate Crimes

The state and country have seen a steep increase in hate crimes over the past several years. Last year the General Assembly removed the requirement that a single individual must be targeted in order for an act to be considered a hate crime and said that if an act targeted a specific group it could be considered a hate crime. This year we are expanding these protections further with SB 232 Hate Crimes - Threats, which makes threatening to commit a hate crime a criminal act with the same penalties as the ones imposed on people who commit these heinous actions.

#### Supporting Our Veterans

##### Providing property tax relief for disabled veterans

Anne Arundel County is home to the second largest population of veterans in Maryland. While there is nothing we could ever do to repay them for their service to our nation, the General Assembly took action this year by passing SB 777 Property Tax - Exemption for Dwelling House owned by Disabled Active Duty Service Members, which will ease the tax burden for those active duty military who become disabled in service to your country, by exempting disabled active duty service members from paying the state property tax.

##### Helping Homeless Veterans

Housing and shelter is a critical component for survival for anybody, and survivors of domestic violence, as well as homeless veterans do not have the resources that others have to get back on their feet. SB 810 Local Housing Grant Program for Homeless Veterans and Victims of Domestic Violence creates the Local Housing Grant

#### Raising the Minimum Wage

Over the past few decades, the average income have stagnated compared to the rate of inflation - which means that someone making the Federal minimum wage in 2019 does not have nearly the same purchasing power as someone earning the same paycheck in 1969. In order to address these losses burdened by workers over time, Maryland became the 6th state in the nation to gradually raise the minimum wage to \$15 per hour.

SB 280 Labor and Employment - Payment of Wages - Minimum Wage (Fight for Fifteen) represents a balanced step forward to increase economic opportunities and elevate families and individuals out of poverty. This measure will raise the state's minimum wage from \$10.10 to \$15 an hour by 2025. The first increase will be to \$11 next year. Businesses with fewer than 14 employees will have until July of 2026 to reach \$15. This legislation will directly benefit 573,000 hardworking Marylanders - that's 22% of the state's entire workforce. Of those who will benefit:

- 64% work full time
- 55% are women
- 31% are single or married parents with 273,000 children

#### Providing Child Care Subsidies

One of the biggest challenges working parents face is the cost of high quality childcare. SB 181 Education - Child Care Subsidies - Mandatory Funding Level expanded Maryland's Childcare Tax Credit by more than \$9 million, this expansion will help more than 110,000 Marylanders afford high quality child care so that they can go back to work with the peace of mind that their child is being well cared for. SB 870 Income Tax - Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit - Alterations expands the eligibility of middle-income families (\$50,000 for a single filer and \$75,000 if filing jointly) to take advantage of child care tax credits.

#### Taking Care of our Federal Workforce

During the latest federal government shutdown, many federal employees in Maryland had to worry about how they would pay their bills. SB 512 Government Shutdown - Employees - Protections would prohibit utility companies from cutting off gas or electric service to furloughed workers during a government shutdown, as well as prohibiting a bank from foreclosing on furloughed employees. SB 391 Federal Shutdown Paycheck Protection Act allows federal workers who are required to report to work, but are not being paid, during a government shutdown to qualify for unemployment

Program which can be used for these critical populations. insurance or to receive no-interest loans. Once the government reopens and the employee receives back-pay they simply repay the unemployment benefits or the loans.

## Maryland's Balanced Budget

Working with our colleagues in the House, we passed a \$46.7 billion balanced budget that protects our most vulnerable citizens, secured millions for the recommendations of the Kirwan Commission, and invests in Chesapeake Bay protection - all without raising taxes or fees. The budget isn't just numbers on a piece of paper, it's a chance for us to protect and fund the programs that will make huge impacts on the lives of Marylanders in every corner of our state. This year's budget included:

- A record \$7+ billion in total public education funding including higher funding for special education services, teacher salaries, full-day pre-K services for low income families, tutoring services for elementary school students who need help to get caught up to their peers, and additional funding for schools in areas with concentrated poverty
- \$500 million for school construction, which will help build schools in every corner of our state
- Direct aid to local school systems increases by \$435.2 million
- \$331 million in community college funding
- \$6.4 billion in higher education funding
- A cap on in-state college tuition increases, guaranteeing that tuition does not go up by more than 2%
- More than \$11.2 billion for the state's Medicaid program
- An additional \$80 million to combat the opioid crisis
- A 3.5% increase for behavioral and mental health providers
- A 3.5% increase for providers serving the developmentally disabled
- \$1.8 billion for public safety in our communities, including needed funds in Baltimore for technological and other upgrades for policing
- \$3.5 million for a rape kit testing fund
- \$2.1 billion spent on transportation projects across Maryland
- \$9.3 billion sent to local jurisdictions for aid to local governments

Our budget also takes care of the state employees who keep our state running each and every day. The budget includes a 3% pay increase for all state employees, a 5% salary increase for law enforcement officers and a 6% salary increase for corrections officers. In addition, the Legislature added a 2% COLA for employees from two collective bargaining units.

We were able to do all of this in a fiscally responsible manner. Everything in the budget is paid for without new revenue streams this year or increases in existing revenue streams. The budget as passed by the General Assembly leaves more than \$1.1 billion in cash reserves in the rainy day fund (6%) and \$118.2 million of unspent revenues from the general fund.

Through the leadership of Speaker Mike Busch, Anne Arundel County will receive \$12.5 million in capital funding for local schools and nonprofit organizations, including: \$1 million for Maryland Hall, \$3 million for Historic Annapolis, \$400,000 for the YWCA's Domestic Violence Shelter, \$1 million to combat flooding at City Dock, \$1 million for Bates Middle School, \$750,000 to build the Newtowne Community Resource Center, \$175,000 for the Annapolis Maritime Museum, \$25,000 for the Deale Volunteer Fire Department, and more.

**My priority is to be your voice in the Senate. In that vein, you will see me host town halls and coffees with your Senator throughout the District, visit schools throughout the County, knock doors in your neighborhood, and attend community events and neighborhood association meetings. Please do not hesitate to contact our office if you would like me to visit or speak to a local group or join me at other scheduled community events:**

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