

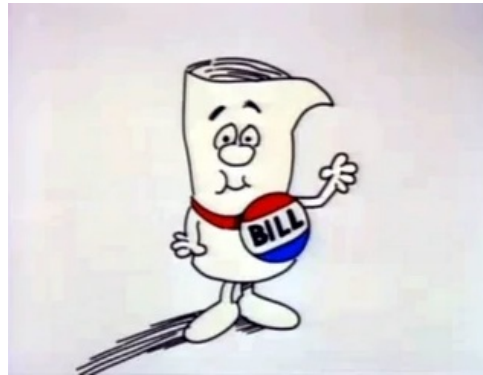
**445th Legislative Session | March 24, 2023 | Legislative Day 73**



## Greetings from Annapolis!

So much has happened since our last report. In the Senate, 977 bills have been heard, and of these bills, a little over 450 of them have moved to the House so far.

Thus far, 24 of my bills have been heard in committee and 14 have passed the Senate and are on their way to the House. So, what did this process look like and where do we go from here?



Bills start on the Senate floor and are introduced to the Senate in what is called a "first reader." The bill is read across the Senate President's desk and is then advanced to the committee of most relevance - sometimes even two committees will need to hear a bill if its topic is relevant in multiple areas. For example, my bill SB0351 - Affordable Life Wills and Estate Planning for Seniors Grant Fund, needed to be heard in the Education, Energy, and the Environment committee, and signed off by the Budget and Taxation committee, since it involved both the creation of a state program, and required budgetary consideration above \$250,000. Bills must be requested by the 10th day of session, introduced by the 27th day of session, and must be passed to the opposite chamber by the 69th day of session - aka "crossover day" March 20th.

After a bill is heard in committee, it is brought to vote. However, not all bills are brought to a vote for reasons of time constraint, feasibility, political considerations, and so forth. If a bill is voted on with a majority of committee members voting favorably, then the bill is brought back to the Senate floor where a floor leader from the committee (such as myself) will introduce the bill and answer questions from the entire Senate. If it passes this process, it goes onto third reader, and then is given a final vote, after which it is in the House!

We have from now until April 10th - Sine Die - which is when Legislative Session officially adjourns. This marks the official 90th, and last, day of Maryland General Assembly Session 2023.

We are now all caught up and are at the final leg of the journey or the march to SINE DIE. I have already begun heading across Bladen Street to present my bills in front of the House committees. After that, it is up to them to decide if my bills will go to the Governor, need to be further amended or "sit in the drawer." I am feeling very optimistic about my bills so far, and I will continue to fight for every one of them as we get down to the last few weeks of Session 2023.

That's it for now. Please read below for more Annapolis happenings and updates. As always, I want to hear from you - please email [mary.washington@senate.state.md.us](mailto:mary.washington@senate.state.md.us) with any questions, comments, or concerns. And if you are on social media, tag us in your post!

In Partnership,

[Click here](#) or read on to see a full list of all my bill names, numbers, texts, hearing dates, and more.

READ "THE ANNAPOLIS REPORT" ONLINE

## Women's History Month Spotlight

**International Women's Day 2023 campaign theme:  
#EmbraceEquity**

International Women's Day was March 8th is celebrated in many countries around the world. It is a day when women are recognized for their achievements without regard to divisions, whether national, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, economic or political. Officially recognized by the United Nations in 1977, IWD first emerged from the activities of labor movements at the turn of the twentieth century in North America and across Europe. The aim of the IWD 2023 is to get the world talking about why equal opportunities aren't enough. People start from different places, so true inclusion and belonging require equitable action. Actions we take in the Senate everyday contributes to this goal.



### **Amtrak Rolls Out 'Night Owl' Fares for Baltimore and Beyond**

Are you traveling this spring for holidays? Now you can reduce your carbon footprint and save money while doing it. Our network produces lower GHG emissions than roadway and air transportation. Passengers on the Northeast Regional and select routes can get fares as low as \$15 (New York to BWI), or \$5 (from Baltimore to Philadelphia).

**This fare is available for travel on select trains departing from 7pm - 5am.**

Check out [www.amtrak.com/nightowl](http://www.amtrak.com/nightowl).

### **MGA Leaders Pledge to Pass Maryland529 Overhaul in Session's Final Weeks**

43rd District Delegate Cathi Forbes of Baltimore County has led House efforts to improve Maryland529 since December when parents with accounts in its Maryland Prepaid College Trust turned to legislators for help recouping tens of thousands of dollars in lost earnings.

**Delegate Forbes and Senator Joanne Benson of Prince George's are sponsors of the HB1290 and SB0950 entitled, "Maryland529 Program – Reform".**

Both chambers are working together to move Maryland529 under the office of the state treasurer and out of the hands of the board responsible for all the agency miscalculations that have left many families in the lurch when it comes to paying next semester's tuition.



*Wearing Red on March 10th - the day of the social work bill hearings - in solidarity with Social Workers for Equality and Ending Racism (SWEAR)*

### **SBo871 and SBo872\* PASSED THE SENATE UNANIMOUSLY!**

In August 2022, a report from the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) revealed a disturbing pattern of decades of racial, age-related, disability, and language bias in their exam pass rates. This study confirmed story after story of incredibly qualified and hard-working social workers who have been kept out of the field simply because they could not pass this exam. For decades these experiences were considered "anecdotal" or simply the deficiencies of the candidate by our state's licensing boards and their national partners. Many social work researchers, faculty, practitioners and students have been sounding the alarm about the power of a single exam to veto an otherwise capable social worker's ability to practice.

**The National Association of Social Workers joined in and came out against the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) Exams in February.**

For context: These exams are needed for social workers to acquire licensure across the United States at the Bachelor's, Master's, and Clinical levels. However, social workers must earn a degree from a CSWE-accredited institution, and then obtain at least two years, consisting of not less than 104 weeks, of at least 3,000 hours of supervised social work experience in order to even be qualified to take the exam.



*Senator Washington presenting in Finance Committee with Sponsor Panels*

**[Check out more on this issue in the Baltimore Sun](#)**

Working closely with those most impacted, we drafted and filed **SB0871 - Social Workers - Moratorium and Workgroup on Social Worker Examination Requirements for Licensure**, and **SB0872 - Temporary License to Practice Social Work as necessary first steps**. We sought a moratorium on the requirement for national exam until the issues of bias are satisfactorily addressed and created a workgroup comprised of members from all across the social work field - from those who are vehemently opposed to the exams to those who created them **to determine the educational, training and testing requirements needed for the social work profession in Maryland and make recommendations for policy changes**. SB0872 sought to provide an immediate pathway to practice for hundreds that have been stalled in their professional journey and service in our communities. The content of this bill was merged by the committee with Senator West's bill SB0145 to allow for both "conditional" and "temporary" licenses, with the same supervision requirements if they have completed all requirements other than the examination. These expire after two years or after passage of their exam. While not the full ban originally sought together, I agree with the committee that these are substantive and impactful reforms as we continue to fight for fairness and equity in all the health professions.

I am so deeply grateful to have had the opportunity to champion this issue, and to the Senate Finance Committee who passed this legislation.

**We look forward presenting these bills in the House on March 30th in HGO!**

## MARYLAND SENATE SESSION 2023

### On the Senate Floor...

#### CROSSOVER DAY

Monday March 20th was "crossover day" in the Maryland General Assembly. The rules require bills to pass one chamber, either the House of Delegates or the State Senate, by the end of the day, to ensure the other chamber will consider it.

#### MAJOR BILLS

##### **Trans Health Equity Act**

Another win for Marylanders in the wake "crossover day" is the passing of my bill, the Trans Health Equity Act (HB0283/SB0460) in both the Senate and House chambers. Amidst a rise in anti-trans legislation in other States, Maryland Medicaid will now cover gender-affirming care for transgender residents.

##### **Child Victims Act**

Senate Bill 686, the Child Victims Act of 2023, passed out of the Senate to the House last week. I led an impassioned defense of the bill, as I believe the human cost to society of abuse will always outweigh the financial cost of helping victims.

From one of our constituents:

***"I am writing with abundant gratitude for your brilliant and compassionate comments in support of Senate Bill 686, the Child Victims Act, on the floor***



#### ***Tis the Season for Floor Reports***

Senator Mary Washington was the floor leaders on 12 bills over the last 3 weeks on the floor. Among them were bills she sponsored as well as those important to the EEE committee and Senate leadership:

- **SB0610** Virtual Education, Senator Mary Washington
- **SB0848** Statewide Rental Assistance Voucher Program, Senator Guzzone
- **SB0813** Comprehensive Flood Management Grant Program, Senator Alonzo Washington
- **SB0551** Service Year Option Program, Governor Moore

**Monday night. I have worked with the survivor community for several years on this legislation. For the first time, we are optimistic about the bill's passage. You pushed our hope higher."**

### **Minimum Wage**

Governor Moore's proposal to accelerate a \$15-per-hour minimum wage has been changed by lawmakers but is moving forward. Under a plan approved by the Senate in SB0555: The Fair Wage Act of 2023, the \$15 wage would go into effect on January 1st, instead of October 1st as Moore sought.

### **Gun Control**

The Senate and House have advanced different versions of bills to curtail the use of concealed carry gun permits, in response to a U.S. Supreme Court decision from last summer that makes it easier for handgun owners to get the permits. The Senate approved a bill that limits where in public that concealed carry is allowed, while the House passed a bill that puts more restrictions on who can qualify for a permit.

- **SB0031** Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners - Student Members and Task Force to Study Compensation and Student Members, Senator Carter
- **SB0382** Accessory Dwelling Unit Policy Taskforce, Senator Mary Washington
- **SB0251** Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs, Senator Mary Washington
- **SB0248** Prohibition on Punitive Measures Related to Student Debt, Senator Kramer
- **SB0332** Maryland African American Museum Corporation - Board of Directors, Senator Hayes
- **SB0127** Student FAFSA Data - Reporting Requirement, Senator Ellis

[VIEW FLOOR PROCEEDINGS HERE](#)

## **SPONSORED BILLS & UPCOMING HEARINGS**



*SWEAR Social Worker Solidarity and after our Finance Committee hearings on SB0871 and SB0872*

Well folks, we have officially made it through crossover!

Monday, March 20th, was the bill crossover deadline for the Maryland General Assembly. In other words, it was the deadline for bills to move from one chamber to the other in order to be considered during this legislative session.

We fought hard, and won some huge fights, including:

- SB0460 - the Trans Health Equity Act.

### **MY BILLS THAT HAVE CROSSED OVER TO THE HOUSE**

- **SB0347** Baltimore County – Class B– ECF/DS (Education Conference Facility/Dining Service) License – Towson University
- **SB0349** State Board of Examiners of Psychologists - License and Registration Issuance and Renewals - Electronic Means
- **SB0351** Maryland Legal Services Corporation - Affordable Life, Wills, and Estate Planning for Seniors Program
- **SB0353** Higher Education - Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program - Alterations
- **SB0381** Baltimore City - Alcoholic Beverages - Class A-7 Licenses
- **SB0382** Accessory Dwelling Unit Promotion and Policy Task Force Primary in the Senate
- **SB0460** Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Gender–Affirming Treatment (Trans Health Equity Act)
- **SB0501** Libraries - Aging Infrastructure Capital Improvement Grant Program - Established (merged with SB0502 - Enoch Pratt)
- **SB0608** Human Services - Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council
- **SB0610** Primary and Secondary

- SBo871 and SBo872 (which is now SB145 - Senator West) - my Social Work Licensure Reform package.
- SBo351 - Affordable Life Wills and Estate Planning for Seniors; and
- SBo610 - Virtual Education reform.

There are, of course, some people I would like to especially thank for these wins. I would like to extend a special thank you to all of the incredible social workers who have continued to fight for equity and equality in the field of social work in Maryland and beyond.

I am so grateful to all of the advocates who fought for the Trans Health Equity Act, with a special shout-out to Senator Lam for his impassioned defense of the bill on the floor.

To all the advocates, legislators, students, teachers, Marylanders, and beyond who have fought beside me for these incredible causes - thank you. I could not do this without you.

- Education - Virtual Education
- **SBo871** Social Workers - Licensure Examinations - Moratorium and Workgroup
- **SBo872 - NOW SB145** (Senator West) State Board of Social Work Examiners - Temporary License to Practice Social Work
- **SBo874** Community Health and Safety Works Grant Program and Fund - Establishment
- **SBo876** Baltimore Regional Transit Commission – Establishment
- **SBo884** Maryland Department of Health - Workgroup to Study the Establishment of an Affordable Assisted Living Enhanced Care Program



*With Senator Brian Simonaire and Elmo on National Read Across America Day*

## EDUCATION, ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT (E<sup>3</sup>) COMMITTEE

### WHAT'S HAPPENING IN (E<sup>3</sup>)

#### Energy

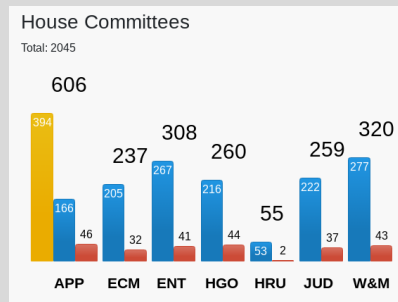
So far, we have passed bills expanding offshore wind energy, continuing and expanding community solar projects, the Advanced Clean Truck Act, the POWER act, and my very own Accessory Dwelling Units Task Force.

#### Education

On the education front, my virtual education reform bill has moved to the House, alongside the comprehensive health education framework, and Governor Moore's service year option program.

#### Environment

Notably the Net Metering Flexibility Act, Adaptive Reuse of Housing, producer responsibility to reduce packaging, and the Baltimore Regional Water Taskforce have all moved over to the House.



### Recent & Upcoming House Bills

**HB1162 Del Griffith, et al** Study on the Utilization of the Expedited Licensing Process for Service Members, Veterans, and Military Spouses

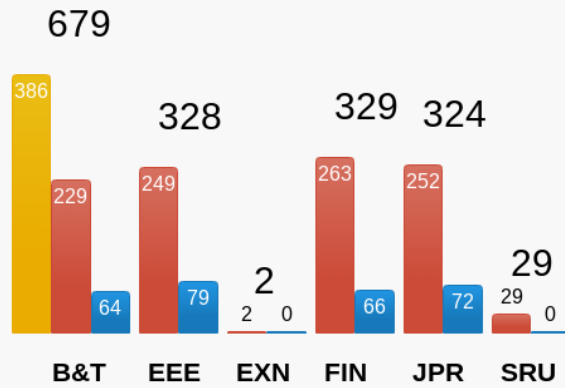
**HB0914 Del Jackson** Public Service Commission – Judicial Review – Proceedings

**HB0459 Del Kaufman, et al** Public Utilities - Street Lighting

## Introduced in Committee

### Senate Committees

Total: 1691



Equipment - Acquisitions and Reporting (County and Municipal Street Lighting Investment Act)

**HB0144 Del Qi** Real Estate Brokers - Inactive Licenses - Requirements After Expiration

**HB0375 Del Attar** Education - Coaches - Mental Health Training

**HB0343 Del Boyce** Education - Public School Athletics - Basketball Schedule

## 43RD DISTRICT CONSTITUENT & COMMUNITY MATTERS

### 43<sup>rd</sup> District COMMUNITY BOARD

BALTIMORE, MD (Wednesday, March 15, 2023) – The Mayor’s Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement announced a Request for Applications for **Baltimore’s first-ever Re-Entry Action Council** geared to coordinate government agencies and community-based organizations around Baltimore’s Re-Entry Continuum of Care that will work to ensure seamless coordination of services to address and reduce barriers for Baltimoreans who have been incarcerated. **Applications will be accepted through March 31, 2023.** Individuals with lived experience are encouraged to apply.



### RETAIL CHOICE

#### From the Baltimore Banner:

*"Senator Mary Washington said that Maryland Attorney General Anthony Brown has introduced legislation asking the General Assembly to empower his office to investigate, among other issues, manipulative market practices, potentially through its consumer protection division."*



COLLEGE OF  
EDUCATION



Maryland Civic Education &  
Engagement Leadership Summit

## Strengthening Civics for All!

Thursday, April 20th

3:30 PM - 7:30 PM

Online

Register:

[bit.ly/StrengtheningCivics](https://bit.ly/StrengtheningCivics)

[www.md-civics.org](http://www.md-civics.org)



Salvation by Liliانا McGee

*"Salvation" by Liliانا McGee - one of last year's winners of the Congressional Art Award from Maryland.*

Do you know a high schooler in the 43rd who loves art? **The Artistic Discovery Contest is open to all high school students in our District.** The winning artwork from our District's competition will be displayed for one year in the US Capitol. The exhibit in Washington will include the winning artwork from all participating congressional districts from around the country.

Students must complete the Student Information and Release Form and submit their artwork to be considered. To access the [2023 Congressional Art Competition Student Information and Release Form](#), please click here.

All artwork entries must be turned in to Kweisi Mfume's Office by **April 21, 2023**.

If you are member a 43<sup>rd</sup> District neighbor, HOA or community association and want to see your event appear in the next newsletter, please email us at [mary.washington@state.senate.md.us](mailto:mary.washington@state.senate.md.us), or call our office at (410) 841-3476.

## BGE Bill SKY HIGH?

CHECK YOUR BGE BILL FOR THIRD-PARTY SUPPLIER OVERCHARGES!

Read this Baltimore Sun op-ed:

<https://bit.ly/BG-E-Sky-high-Energy-Supplier-Overcharges>



I have been working on Energy Retail Choice Reform since 2021 and we continue to face challenges in protecting consumers. The problem itself is that third-party energy suppliers are in no way regulated in their advertising or marketing requirements. They can claim that they are selling "clean", "low-price", and/or "environmentally friendly" energy sources to consumers, without needing to verify these claims in any way shape or form. I was appalled at the aggressive targeting tactics used by these groups to hit low-income communities of color in Maryland. They have been deeply predatory and I took action. During a briefing in front of the EEE committee, I grilled the Public Service Commission on their failure to protect Maryland's citizens from these practices. I also helped pass the 2021 bill "The Energy Supply Reform Bill", which should be working to prohibit up-charging energy customers. Thus far, the PSC has failed in this task - which is why I am advocating for the new Attorney General, Anthony Brown, to take over the monitoring of these programs and to aggressively pursue action against those who arbitrarily claim falsehoods regarding energy. I am excited to continue working with the AG's office and the Governor's Administration on this important issue, and I hope to see progress in this area soon. Please check out this [amazing article in the Baltimore Banner](#) to learn more!



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You can follow me on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) or visit my website: [www.senatormaryashington.com](http://www.senatormaryashington.com).

As always, I encourage you to contact me about the issues that matter to you or if you would like me to visit your community. Please feel free to call, tweet, or email me.

Until next week...

Your Senator,

# YORK ROAD COMMUNITY DAYS

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March 25 • April 1  
April 15 • April 22

York Road Initiative Office  
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Baltimore, MD 21212

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YRICOMMERCIAL@LOYOLA.EDU



Winter is coming to an end, but mental health crises can occur year-round. Please take care of yourself today and call the 988 hotlines if you need help. The Senate recently passed SB0003 which funds this amazing program, and I am proud to be a part of a system that prioritizes self-care.