

**445th Legislative Session | January 24, 2023, Volume II**



Greetings from Annapolis!

Our second week of the 445th Legislative Session was monumental in a number of ways. I was honored to witness the swearing in of Governor Wes Moore and Lieutenant Governor Aruna Miller by The Honorable Matthew J. Fader, Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Maryland inside the Senate Chambers along with our colleagues from the House of Delegates, other elected officials, and honored guests (and yes Oprah Winfrey). Soon after we joined the 6,000 people from across the state and the country to witness the public swearing in ceremony and taking of the oath of office. The cheers and tears were evidence of just how historic this day truly was. The Governor's remarks were honest and uplifting and I was buoyed by his pledge that he and his administration would cooperate and collaborate with the General Assembly with respect and a true sense of shared responsibility for the protecting and securing the health, safety, and welfare of the people of Maryland.

Meanwhile, back on the ranch... Friday was the deadline to request legislative services draft a bill. Amidst all the festivities, we spent much of the week in dialogue with colleagues, policy analysts and other stakeholders about specific bill language. My staff (Carissa, Melanie, and Adwoa), intern (Molly) and social work fellow (Cara) did a tremendous job doing outreach, conducting research, editing, drafting, and brainstorming to provide the DLS drafters with enough details of each piece of proposed legislation to turn the draft around as quickly as possible. For the time being, we wait.

Gov. Wes Moore (D) delivered his first state budget to the MGA on Friday, a \$63.1 billion spending plan that includes increases for education and transportation programs. For the first time in 8 years, the proposed budget better reflects the values of most Marylanders. Additionally, the plan accelerates raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour, expands eligibility for the childcare tax credit, and permanently extends a tax credit to immigrants. I look forward to seeing these alongside his budget and policy initiatives in committee.

That is it for now. Please read the rest for more Annapolis happenings. As always, I want to hear from you, - please email [mary.washington@senate.state.md.us](mailto:mary.washington@senate.state.md.us) with questions, comments, or concerns.

In Partnership,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mary Washington". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mary" and last name "Washington" clearly legible.

**READ "THE ANNAPOLIS REPORT" ONLINE**

---

**HERE'S THE LATEST**

**Maryland 529 chair resigns! House**

Delegates held a hearing on Thursday to question the 529 college savings plan leadership regarding after families inability to access all of the money in their accounts.



**Senate 529 Hearing:** Today we heard from Anthony Savia, Executive Director of Maryland 529 and Geoff Newman, Interim Board Chair regarding the widespread issues that the Maryland 529 program has been experiencing. I am deeply frustrated with the situation, and I empathize with all of you struggling due to this debacle. I can assure you that we take this very seriously, and I am going to work tirelessly to advocate for you all and to resolve this situation. We heard from several brave individuals willing to tell their stories today, including Wendy Hall and Bryan Savoie. Thank you all for bringing light to this important issue, and please reach out to us with your experiences. I wish I had more answers at this time, but I can assure you I am going to fight to get them. If you would like to watch the hearing from this afternoon you can find the recording here: ([Senate Hearing – view](#)).

**2023 Income Tax Season Opens In MD:** Tax season kicked off Jan. 23 when Maryland residents could begin filing their 2022 federal tax returns with the IRS and state comptroller. [For more information go to www.marylandtaxes.gov](http://www.marylandtaxes.gov).

**Senator Susan Lee appointed Secretary of State.** Lee is an attorney and served in the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights and the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office before joining the MGA.

**Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland elected new leaderships :** Chair: Delegate Jheanelle Wilkins; 1st Vice Chair: Delegate Melissa Wells; 2nd Vice Chair: Delegate Karen Toles; Treasurer: Delegate Marlon Amprey; Secretary: Delegate Jamila Woods and **Financial Secretary: Senator Mary Washington.** Public meetings are held weekly Thursdays at 8:00am.

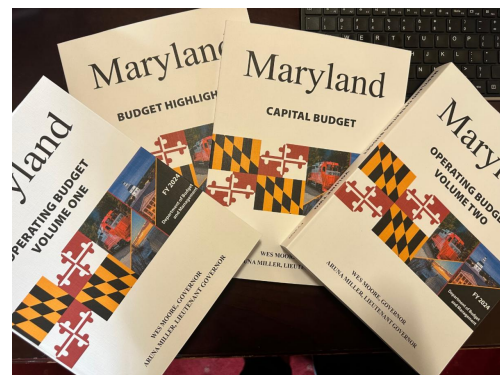
---

## This Week on the Senate Floor...

The Senate received the following:

Maryland FY 2024 Operating Budget (HB 200; SB 181); Message from the Executive, Executive Order-Reorganization of State Government, Introduction of Senate Bills, and Bond Initiatives for a total of 290.

Starting Today, Tuesday, January 24th, Senate committees will begin hearing bills in the bills assigned committees and soon these will start to come to the Senate floor for debate and a vote.



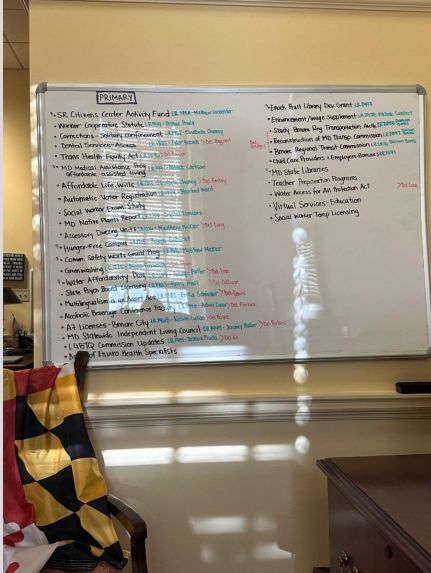
[VIEW FLOOR PROCEEDINGS HERE](#)

## SPONSORED BILLS & COMMITTEE WORK

Last Friday, January 20th, was the deadline to

submit a bill for the 2023 Legislative Session.

The Senator has requested that DLS draft **35** bills. Not all will be submitted for this session. Here are the policy areas:



- **Water Access:**
  - Ending water shutoffs to vulnerable populations.
  - Water accessibility for all - water tax incentive.
- **Affordable Life Wills and Estate Planning for Seniors**
- **Worker Cooperative Statute**
- **Social Work Practice:**
  - Temporary licensure
  - Address workforce shortages in rural and urban areas and report on racial disparities in passage rates for ASWB national exam
- **Gender Affirming Treatment- Medicaid**
- **Green Retail Choice Reform**
- **Enoch Pratt Library Grant**
- **Library Revitalization Grant**
- **Accessory Dwelling Units**
- **Community Health and Safety Work Grant Program**
- **Ending solitary confinement in Maryland**
- **Virtual Learning Standards (vetoed in '22)**
- **Childcare Provider and Employee Bonuses**
- **Multilingualism is an Asset Act of 2023**
- **Baltimore Regional Transit Commission**
- **Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program Fund Increase**
- **Oral Healthcare - healthcare-coverage and mandated checkups for children.**



## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN E3?

### Committee Briefings:

#### PANEL:

**Affordable Housing:** Statewide and Local Partnerships

- Claudia Wilson Randall, Community Development Network of Maryland
- Lisa May, Maryland Realtors; Dominic Butchko, Maryland Association of Counties;
- Angelica Bailey Thupari, Maryland Municipal League

#### TAKEAWAYS:

- By March, nearly all counties will have exhausted their COVID-era rental assistance funds.
- Renters in arrears are set to lose their last backstop to eviction.
- Post American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP), counties and municipalities will largely be the sole



Senator Washington serves on the **Senate Committee on Education, Energy and Environment** & is Senate Chair of **Administrative, Executive & Legislative Review Committee (AELR)**.

AELR has compiled statistics since its formation in 1993 on the number of regulations received from each agency. The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) has historically been the most prolific agency in submitting regulations to AELR, and in 2022 again submitted the most regulations. As of December 13, 2022,



responder as the main provider of social services.

- Policy and budget actions are needed to account for the pending gap in programmatic infrastructure and services provided for by federal funding.

### **PANEL: Curriculum Development, State Superintendent of Schools Education**

- Mohammed Choudry, State Superintendent of Schools
- Dr. Sonja Brookins Santelises, Chief Executive Officer, Baltimore City Schools

### **TAKEAWAYS:**

MSDE is working to implement the Blueprint for Maryland's Future provisions passed by the Maryland General Assembly in 2021 to transform public education in the state into a world-class education system.

#### **Teacher Vacancies (2021-2022):**

- 2,000 state educator vacancies
- 44% of public schools had vacancies
- Baltimore City had 240 vacancies
- Baltimore County had 430 vacancies

To see upcoming EEE hearings or bill hearings, please go to:

[2023 Committee Calendar](#)

AELR had received 19 regulations submitted by executive agencies in 2022 for emergency approval and 164 regulations proposed for adoption within normal timeframes, for an overall total of 183 regulations. In 2021, AELR received 20 emergency regulations and 241 proposed regulations for a total of 261 regulations.



### **What is the Blueprint?**

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future is the legislation enacting the recommendations of the Kirwan Commission. The Commission made recommendations in five policy areas:

- Early childhood education;
- High-quality and diverse teachers and leaders;
- College- and career-readiness pathways;
- Governance and accountability; and
- The funding formula and resources needed to ensure all students are successful.

The legislation increases education funding by \$1.1 billion over the next three years.

Governor Moore has earmarked \$15 million for teacher recruitment incentives.

## **43RD DISTRICT CONSTITUENT & COMMUNITY MATTERS**



If you are a member of a community association or of the overall community, and want to see your event appear in the next newsletter:

If you haven't registered with our office yet, please fill out this form:  
<https://forms.gle/adg1Z3ijNGRtfPHb9>.

For event and meeting updates, please email us a graphic of the event, and all relevant information you would like to see included to

### **RESOURCES & HAPPENINGS**

Enoch Pratt Free Library is now offering Lawyer in the Library, in partnership with Maryland Legal Aid.

Types of issues that Lawyer in the Library can assist you with include:

- Bankruptcy
- Child Custody
- Divorce
- Expungement (removing convictions from criminal records)
- Foreclosure
- Government Benefits
- Landlord/Tenant
- Wills/Tenants

This service is available to those who meet the income guidelines which can be found here:  
<https://www.mdlab.org/get-help-services/income-guidelines/>

mary.washington@state.senate.md.us.

Feel free to call my office at (410) 841-3476.

To find out more about this program, please visit the Enoch Pratt Free Library website at <https://www.prattlibrary.org/services/lawyer-in-the-library>.

## KEEP IN TOUCH

You can follow me **Instagram**, **Twitter**, **Facebook** or my website:  
[www.senatormarywashington.com](http://www.senatormarywashington.com)

As always, I encourage you to contact me about the issues that matter to you. Please feel free to call or email me.

Until next week...

Your Senator,

Mary L. Washington

