



**DELEGATE ERIC
EBERSOLE
DISTRICT 12**

**THE CONNECTION:
LEGISLATIVE
NEWSLETTER -
MID-SESSION 2016**

**PERIODIC NEWSLETTER TO KEEP YOU INFORMED AND UP
TO DATE WITH POLITICAL HAPPENINGS IN
ANNAPOLIS AND IN HOWARD AND BALTIMORE COUNTIES**



**CROSSOVER IS
HERE**

**WHAT IS
HAPPENING IN
EDUCATION**

**ENVIRONMENTAL
INITIATIVES**

**OTHER
LEGISLATION OF
INTEREST**

**DELEGATE
ERIC EBERSOLE**
6 Bladen Street –Rm. 305
Annapolis MD 21401
eric.ebersole@house.state.md.us
410 841 3328
www.ericbersole.org





CROSSOVER IS HERE!

Crossover is the date by which bills that are passed in one chamber must be passed to the other chamber for approval. This year it was March 21. Bills must go through the whole process



again there, so we must leave enough time before the end of session (sine die) which is April 11th. This year has been a banner year for legislation. The House of Delegates and Senate have introduced over 2,800 bills! With so many new legislators in the second session of their term, it seems we have found our stride and have some things we want to accomplish. Not all these bills will pass of course, but we have a public hearing in committee on every one! This year, there are some very interesting ones heading across the hallway.

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN EDUCATION:

This year, thanks again to the efforts of our legislature, funding for education is back on track. I am pleased that we have managed to get a little money back for Baltimore schools in the budget. The formulas currently in use were costly to them this year, partly because of a drop in enrollment and partly a result of a computation based on total property value that does not include government owned property.

There are a number of efforts to expand the role of our schools in the community and to make them more effective. One that I am proud of is the Community Schools Initiative that I am working on with Delegate Mary Washington. With the support of a full-time site coordinator, these schools tap into a network of partnerships between the school and other community resources to promote student

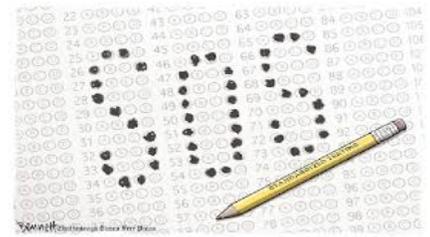


achievement and family and community well-being. An integrated focus on academics, enrichment, health and social supports, youth and community development and family engagement is designed to promote student success, strong families and healthy communities. Partnerships allow schools to become resources to the community and offer programs and opportunities that are open to all. I have found, from my 30+

years as a teacher that schools that have insertion into and involvement with the community are not only a great resource, but also are considerably more effective in their primary goal of teaching. I have seen that happen organically, but this program is intentional and has been shown to be effective here in Maryland on a limited basis. I would like to see it expand across the state, including to several needy schools in District 12. It will take some time and effort to get this rolling, but it will be worth it and I will be in for the long haul on this one!

I am still focused on testing as I serve on the commission which will conclude its work in July of this

commission charge that we can act on immediately. Bills that have been introduced cover capping hours of testing for any student at 2% of the total hours of school in a year, asking local school systems to continue to update a matrix on the amount of testing they do (both for our information and for some self-reflection on their part), requiring schools to notify parents of the timing and amount of testing, removing PARCC test results from teachers' evaluations, having Maryland be one of seven applicants for a federal grant to explore alternative assessment methods, and limiting the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment regarding time and number of students who take it. I am the lead sponsor or a co-sponsor of all of these. Meanwhile the commission is getting into some heavy lifting in this area as well and making some real positive progress.



THE ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION:



I take caring for our environment, and the personal and economic health that comes with a healthy environment, very seriously. We are still very focused on the Chesapeake Bay, one of the most unique and productive estuaries in the world. In particular of late, there is a great deal of focus on chicken litter. The poultry



industry here in Maryland is an important one in terms of jobs and tax base. At the same time, the damage that is caused by the oversupply of chicken litter and the phosphorus it dumps into the bay is a danger to our health and the industries that rely on the Chesapeake. The businesses that do so well here in chicken farming are responsible in part for this threat and need to take the responsibility for the mitigation of the byproduct of their very successful and fruitful business. We in the legislature, do not believe this is a burden that should be borne in majority by individual farmers. Legislation is progressing to this end.

Meanwhile, in the area of transportation, the Maryland Open Transportation and Investment Decision Act is going to reformulate the way we choose priorities for transportation projects. Some of the recent decisions made by the Governor have, in my opinion, shown a lack of



fairness and insight in choosing project priority. This new formula will create a reasonable and objective system to make project decisions fair with an emphasis on public transportation as well as roads. I am in support of this measure. I feel it will help us focus on the future, both in terms of keeping our roads and bridges safe while giving

public transportation the attention it needs and deserves in our future

SOME SPECIFIC LEGISLATION AND INITIATIVES:

End of Life Options Act – For the second year, there was an attempt to allow individuals who are within six months of the end of a terminal illness to make end of life decisions. This was a measure with many safeguards that was well written. I am a strong believer in the sanctity, but also the dignity, of life. I have received opinions on both sides of the matter, but they have been overwhelmingly in favor of this measure. Additionally, visual polls at every senior community I have visited have led me to believe that support among those who stand to use this legislation the most is virtually unanimous. We supported it in the House of Delegates, but the Senate withdrew the measure. I feel we will see it again in the future.

Campaign Finance – I re-introduced a bill that seeks to limit the effect of the Citizens United decision on Maryland elections. This bill will reduce the ways that secret, corporate donors can affect our elections and it limit big money in our campaign process. The bill has not made it out of committee, but if it languishes, I will introduce it again next year and I am getting some real encouragement on it for the future.



Capital Improvements – I have, along with the other members of the District 12 team, submitted legislation for a number of improvement projects. Among the non-profits we hope to help are, The Howard County Conservancy, The Arbutus Fire Department, The Howard County Food Bank, Huntington and South Branch Parks, Good Shepherd Services, and Vantage House. The Governor has not put any money in the budget for these projects, but we are still going through the vetting process hopefully. Perhaps we will be able to convince the Governor of the importance of these organizations and their projects.

LET ME HEAR FROM YOU:

As always, I love hearing from my constituents- whether you have opinions on any legislation, have an idea for a bill that should be introduced, or need help with any government agency, please feel free to contact my office any time.

Best,

Eric Ebersole
eric.ebersole@house.state.md.us

State Delegate, District 12
6 Bladen St.



House Office Building, Room 350
Annapolis, MD 21401