



# MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

## THE CONNECTION

A PERIODIC UPDATE ON HAPPENINGS –  
FROM BALTIMORE COUNTY TO ANNAPOLIS



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EBERSOLE**  
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DISTRICT 44A

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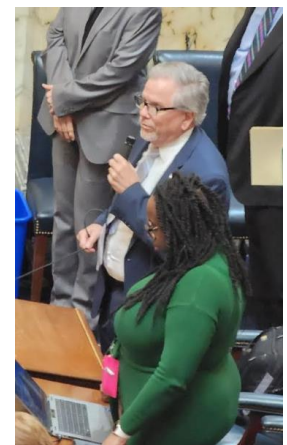
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Thank you for the honor and privilege of serving you as your State Delegate and representative in Annapolis. The 2025 legislative session concluded on April 7th, 2025, and it was a productive session in many ways. A special thank you to everyone who emailed, called, wrote letters, or came to Annapolis to speak to me about legislation that mattered to you and, as a result, mattered even more to me. This session I received thousands of emails, dozens of letters or postcards, and hundreds of phone calls from my constituents. Your opinions and thoughts are of great value to me, and I am honored to have the task of representing your interests.

I entered this legislative session with the understanding that there was a projected budget deficit of almost three billion dollars. With this information in mind, I was acutely aware that sacrifices would need to be made, but I stood resolute that the sacrifices should not be made on the backs of those Marylanders that it would impact the most and who could afford it the least. Then, with the added uncertainty of support and stability coming from the current presidential administration, my focus on this year's legislative agenda became clear: to assist those who need help the most and to mitigate the impact of the dramatic changes happening in Washington, D.C..

The budget proposed by the Governor's office generated more revenue, but The House of Delegates was aware that additional adjustments would need to be made to solve the long-term challenges that lie ahead. This helped shape the plan to revive the House's proposed revenue package from the last



legislative session which would allow for the goal to protect programs that boost the economy and support the middle class - such as restoring proposed cuts to education, childcare, disability, and crime victim programs.

The budget that we start with is never the budget that we end with, and with this in mind, we have - House and Senate members alike - had the opportunity to provide input and include our priorities. As the chair of the Education Subcommittee in the Ways and Means Committee, I deeply hold my dedication to our youth, our teachers, the support personnel, and administrators that make up the Maryland Public School System. Education and the children we teach are our future. I have participated in numerous meetings with a large variety of stakeholders to gauge their interests and priorities within the budget this year.



### *We considered several initiatives on revising the Blueprint for Maryland's Future*


I want to assure you that the Blueprint for Maryland's Future is *not* causing the general fund deficit and I remain committed to fully funding education so that every student may succeed, no matter their zip code. Accordingly, changes to the blueprint were brought forth in *HB 504: The Excellence in Maryland Schools Act*.

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future is a transformative and generational piece of legislation, crafted using years of research to ensure the best possible education for every child in Maryland. When the Governor brought *HB504: Excellence in Maryland Schools Act*, a bill proposing major changes to the Blueprint, we saw an opportunity to create better solutions for Maryland's education system. After collaborating to make several amendments, the bill now ensures an efficacious implementation of the Blueprint as intended. We have ensured that none of the at-risk students (our special needs learners, multi-language learners, and those in concentrations of poverty) will see a reduction in the support they need to be successful.

In response to persisting teacher shortages, this bill delays establishing more collaborative time for teachers for three years, however it innovates substitute solutions and sets up grants right from the beginning to establish collaborative time. It establishes the Maryland Teacher Relocation Incentive Grant, improves the Grow Your Own Educators Grant Program, and protects teacher candidates from pay reductions. These measures will improve teacher recruitment and retention across the state and attract teachers from out of state as well.

Despite the difficult fiscal climate, this bill still prioritizes maintaining the quality of our schools. This bill maintains the target per-pupil spending amount, increases staffing for community school administration, and provides more flexibility for where counties can spend Concentration of Poverty Grants. It also establishes and funds the Academic Excellence Program, which will deploy instructional coaches and coordinators of professional learning (CPL) to low-performing schools.

By refining the Blueprint's implementation, this bill upholds our promise to invest in our schools, support our educators, and provide every student with the opportunities they deserve.



### *In addition to HB 504, several notable pieces of legislation that focus on education passed the House of Delegates including:*

*HB147: County Boards of Education - Elementary and Middle Schools - Student Technology Use Policy:* Student phone and technology use in school has been increasingly problematic in recent years and is

proving to be detrimental to student achievement, mental health, and social development. Certain Maryland counties have acted by establishing policies that prohibit elementary and middle school students from using a personal electronic device during school hours. *HB147 Student Technology Use Policy* requires all county boards to develop such policies, ensuring that all students across the state can be held accountable to focus on their learning. This bill stalled in the Senate, but 19 of our 24 school districts have a recently updated policy indicating good local response. We will work on the bill again next year to bring everyone on board.

**HB0161: Primary and Secondary Education - Comprehensive Health Education Framework – Established:** We owe it to each Maryland student to provide a high-quality and comprehensive health education, but some county curricula have been deviating from this standard. *HB161 Comprehensive Health Education Framework - Established* requires the State Department of Education to collaborate with the Maryland Department of Health to develop an updated comprehensive health education framework to include important topics like mental health, substance abuse prevention, family life, human sexuality, violence prevention, and safe internet use. With this framework, counties can create age-appropriate curricula and establish alternative plans for students whose parents opt them out of family life and human sexuality topics. This ensures all students a quality health education while providing for unique circumstances.

**HB197: Public Schools - Restorative Practices Schools - Comprehensive Plan:** Restorative practices are a proactive, research-supported, and culturally responsive student discipline model that still keeps students accountable for any harm done and provides methods to repair affected relationships. *HB197 Public Schools - Restorative Practices Schools - Comprehensive Plan* provides support for schools to use more restorative practices. It also requires MSDE to establish Restorative Practices Schools to recognize schools that integrate restorative practices into daily practices and activities of the whole school. Through conflict resolution, mediation, and trauma-informed care, this model ensures that teachers and students feel safer and are more engaged in learning.

**HB325 Adult Education - High School Diploma by Examination - Requirements and Study** This legislation requires the Maryland Department of Labor to allow individuals to take the GED in English or Spanish, and requires the Department to study the feasibility and cost of offering additional languages as well. This will remove significant professional barriers to adult immigrants and K-12 youth, making Maryland more equitable for everyone.

**HB493 Public Schools - Commemorative Day - Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day:** Designating November 14 as Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day to commemorate Ruby Bridges, who, on November 14, 1960, became the first African American student to integrate an all-white school in New Orleans, Louisiana; and requiring the State Department of Education to develop model content for a program of education for Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day.

*Public transportation is always an important topic in Annapolis, and this year a number of notable bills were brought forward for the Assembly to consider. Among these bills, some of note are:*

**HB375: Bicycles, Play Vehicles, and Unicycles - Authorizations and Requirements (Jay's Law)** : Former Maryland law forbade bicycles on sidewalks as the default statewide. However, certain localities have overridden this law for safety reasons, such as concerns about children riding bikes to school. This inconsistency has created confusion for cyclists, especially since roads often switch between state,

county, and city designations. *HB375 Bicycles, Play Vehicles, and Unicycles - Authorizations and Requirements (Jay's Law)* amends state law to read that, unless prohibited by local ordinance, a person may ride a bicycle, play vehicle, or unicycle on sidewalks as long as they yield to pedestrians and ride safely. This bill was a great step towards Maryland's Zero Deaths goals by aligning Maryland code with safe and equitable biking.

*HB707: Vehicle Laws - Licenses, Identification Cards, and Moped Operator's Permits - Notation of Nonapparent Disability (Eric's ID Law)*: *HB707 Eric's ID law* is named after Eric Carpenter-Grantham, who is an African American 20-year-old with autism. After George Floyd was murdered, his mother feared for his safety if he were stopped by law enforcement due to his invisible disability. *HB707* requires that individuals have the option of indicating their non apparent disability and including notation of it on their driver's license, identification card, or moped operator's permit. This bill also requires law enforcement to be trained concerning interactions with people with non apparent disabilities. With this legislation, we are taking a critical step toward preventing unnecessary escalation and ensuring equitable treatment in law enforcement.

*Energy legislation has received a great deal of attention this session. Everyone has experienced an increase in their gas and electric bills. As a result, the legislature brought forward and considered a number of meaningful pieces of legislation for consideration.*

*HB1035: The Next Generation Energy Act*: The bill protects ratepayers by prohibiting the use of multiyear rate plans. Additionally, gas companies will need to justify any new gas infrastructure investments and are further prohibited from recovering through rates any trade association memberships, or purchases and uses of private planes. The bill also holds data centers accountable for their energy uses by ensuring that they pay their own costs for interconnecting to the electrical system.

*HB1036: Renewable Energy Certainty Act*: This legislation creates statewide standards for solar and battery storage projects, it prohibits excessive restrictions that prevent responsible solar and battery storage development, and it ensures that Marylanders are protected against predatory practices

*HB1037: Energy Resource Adequacy and Planning Act* : This bill establishes the Strategic Energy Planning Office. Obtaining information from PJM continues to be a tricky and difficult endeavor and they don't always have the best interests of Marylanders and its citizens at heart. The establishment of this office will ensure that Maryland has an accurate assessment of current and future energy needs and will create solutions of ways to address those needs with minimal cost to ratepayers in the state.

*Given the recent immigration enforcement executive orders from the Trump Administration, the members of the Maryland General Assembly and myself worked to pass legislation to protect Maryland immigrants.*

I co-sponsored *HB1006: Immigration Enforcement- Sensitive Locations- Guidelines and Policies (Protecting Sensitive Locations Act)*. This bill requires the Attorney General to develop guidelines for entities at sensitive locations to limit immigration enforcement from issuing arrests, searches, inspections, seizures, and subpoenas at sensitive locations, such as schools, medical centers, places of worship, among other locations. In doing so, *HB1006* intends to re-instill safety for immigrants in Maryland. Through this, we are ensuring that Maryland children feel secure to attend school and that

all Marylanders can worship and attend events such as funerals, weddings, protests, etc. without fear of ICE detainment.

I also co-sponsored HB1222: Public Safety– Immigration Enforcement (Maryland Values Act), which will prohibit state and local enforcement agencies, including county sheriffs, from entering into immigration enforcement agreements. This will prohibit counties in Maryland from engaging in 287(g) programs with ICE, which currently allows local police officers to act as ICE agents in order to detain, arrest, and question individuals in Maryland. By prohibiting this agreement, Maryland will work to ensure that we remain a safe place for immigrants.

House Bill 1431: State and Local Agencies– Enforcement of Federal Immigration Law– Restrictions on Access to Immigration (Maryland Data Privacy Act). This bill requires law enforcement agencies to deny access to privacy databases to any individual who appears to be or is seeking information access for the purpose of enforcing federal immigration law. In doing so, HB1431 ensures privacy for all Marylanders, helping to restrict federal ICE raids and seizures.

Overall, during this session, my fellow members and I jumped into action in response to President Trump’s executive orders, working to better protect and support Maryland immigrants.

## Improving healthcare affordability and quality were top priorities in Annapolis this legislative session.

My fellow legislators and I passed HB424: Lowering Prescription Drug Costs for all Marylanders Now Act. This bill requires the Prescription Drug Affordability Board to establish a process for setting upper payment limits for purchases and payer reimbursements of prescription drug products, along with authorizing the board to reconsider an upper payment limit for a drug that becomes a shortage and requiring the board to confer with the Maryland Medical assistance program before establishing an upper payment limit. In doing so, this bill takes a crucial step towards lowering prescription costs in Maryland.

The General Assembly also passed HB158: Department of Aging– Senior Call-Check and Social Connections Program. This bill will improve and rename the Senior Call-Check Service and Notification Program to be the Senior Call-Check and Social Connections Program in order to foster more social engagement, wellness, and service integration for senior citizens.

*We also passed a series of bills aimed towards improving Maternal Health.*

HB1538: Maryland Medical Assistance Program - Maternal Health Monitoring Pilot Program established a program dedicated to support pregnant and postpartum persons who have higher risk of pregnancy complications.

HB170 : Health - Maternal and Child Health Population Health Improvement Fund - Use extends the deadline for the Maternal and Child Health Population Health Improvement fund from 2025 to 2027.

HB553: Maryland Medical Assistance Program - Maternal Health Self-Measured Blood Pressure Monitoring requires the Maryland Medical Assistance Program to provide coverage for self-measured blood pressure monitoring.

Overall, this legislation aims to make healthcare more accessible and affordable, making critical efforts to improve the health of all Marylanders.

Within the district, there are a number of abandoned and neglected cemeteries that have drawn my attention.



Caring for the final resting places of our loved ones is important because we should honor the memory and dignity of those who have passed. Additionally, cemeteries often contain valuable historical information which provides insight into our local history. Neglected cemeteries are also an issue of public safety. Abandoned cemeteries can attract vandalism and could possibly pose safety risks as well. I was happy to support *HB535: Abandoned and Neglected Cemeteries Fund - Establishment*. This bill will provide funding to groups who wish to provide care and upkeep of cemeteries that have long gone without care. I will be happy to work with groups within my district who wish to support and repair the abandoned and neglected cemeteries within the district and ensure that they obtain the funding required to meet this community need.

### *Personal Legislation*

This year I sponsored several pieces of legislation. I am proud to report that *HBI, the See Someone, Save Someone Act*, passed the House and Senate unanimously. The See Someone, Save Someone Act requires the Maryland Department of Transportation to train its employees how to recognize and report the signs of human trafficking. Roughly 40% of human trafficking victims reported that they were trafficked using public transportation. I believe that this type of training is an important step towards combating human trafficking.

*HB 986: Primary and Secondary Education -New Teachers- Retention Program*: – Last session I passed legislation that would create new and equally rigorous pathways to teacher certification. That effort was to allow choices that would be alternatives to the Praxis test that tends to weed out people of color. This legislation goes further – creating policy that will keep teachers once we encourage them into the profession. All first, second-, and third-year teachers will be assigned a mentor in their building and the school must create a cohort of these teachers – overseen by a veteran educator – that will meet to share solutions to the challenges encountered in the first years of teaching. I have a personal stake here. I had a tough first year all those years ago and a few veteran teachers organically decided to step up and help me navigate that year. Had they not been willing to give their free time, I may not have survived that year and gone on to teach for 35 years. This bill adds structure, as well as compensation for participating mentors and cohort guides. Teachers were generous with me then and generally teachers now would gladly volunteer, but we ask them to do so much and they need to be valued and given professional development time or money for their good advice and help. This legislation stalled in the Senate, but I will work to address their concerns and bring it back next year

### *Baltimore County Delegation*

It was my privilege to serve as the Chair of the Baltimore County House Delegation again this session. The delegation took up numerous bills regarding local policy that will impact Baltimore County residents and met weekly with different leaders in the county for briefings and discussion on how the delegation and its partners can work together for the people of Baltimore County. Some of these guests included our partnering elected officials at the County and Federal Levels. It was a great honor to be joined by our new Baltimore County Executive Kathy Klausmeier who discussed the importance of the partnership that exists between the county government and us at the state level. We were also fortunate enough to be joined by our federal partners in Congressman Johnny Olszewski from Maryland's 2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District as well as Senator Chris Van Hollen. They both lead important discussions on fighting for Maryland's federal workers who have been laid off by the current administration in the White House, keeping our students safe and protected from ICE in our schools, and the continued importance of a strong partnership between Maryland's local, state, and federal elected officials.

Other guests our Delegation were joined by were the Presidents of our Baltimore County colleges- CCBC, Towson University, and UMBC. We're lucky to have such great public colleges in Baltimore

County, and the delegation greatly appreciated their willingness to meet with us and discuss how our work in Annapolis can help them best serve their students, faculty, and local communities. In addition to these colleges the delegation was also fortunate enough to have briefings from organizations that provide incredibly important resources and services to the people of Baltimore County including Baltimore County Public Libraries, Baltimore County Public Schools, Sheppard Pratt Mental Health Services, and Baltimore County Police. These groups diligently work to serve and improve the lives of our delegation's constituents on issues including education, tech equity, mental health, and public safety so we appreciate their willingness to collaborate with lawmakers at the state level in order to find best practices and solutions on these issues in our communities.

### *Capital Improvements for Southwest Baltimore County*

In this year's budget I am incredibly proud to announce that I have secured or helped secure funding for a number of projects to improve our district including:

\$150,000 for the Baltimore County Arts Guild,

\$250,000 for Catonsville Rails to Trails, and

\$100,000 for Southwest Visions.

\$100,000 CAA Park to create a new playground on the Ingleside property

\$400,000 for Music City Maryland to continue their amphitheater project near Ingleside Avenue,

\$400,000 for Friends of Patapsco Valley State Park to improve and open the horse farm property.


\$500,000 for improvements to the Arbutus Marketplace located on East Drive

I am incredibly proud to have secured this 3.9 million dollars for capital projects in our community, especially in a year where money was tight. I love it here in Southwest Baltimore County and I want this community to thrive.

Additionally \$2,000,000 was awarded to the Maryland Economic Development Corporation (MEDCO) for acquisition, updates, and improvements at the Catonsville Armory. The Catonsville Armory has languished empty and deteriorating for nearly three years. MEDCO, is a problem solving resource that will work to improve and keep the Catonsville Armory as a viable business entity, supplanting additional unwanted development and crowding in that area.

Thanks again for your support and participation over the last 90 days. I am already eagerly looking forward to the 2026 legislative session. As always, I hope that you will share your concerns and ideas with me. Please, stay in touch.

Yours,



Delegate Eric Ebersole

**LET ME HEAR FROM YOU!**

**My team and I are focused on providing constituent support. If there is anything we can do to help, please do not hesitate to contact my office via email or phone. You will get a prompt response.**

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*COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS AND LEADERSHIP ROLES*



- **Ways and Means Committee**
- **Chair- Education Subcommittee - Ways and Means**
- **Member - Early Childhood Subcommittee - Ways and Means**
- **Chair – Baltimore County House Delegation**
- **Member - Joint Committee on Children, Youth & Families**
- **House of Delegates Representative - Education Commission of the States, State Interagency Coordinating Council, and Southern Regional Education Board**
- **Advisory Board Member - MD Center for School Safety**
- **Board Member – Consortium on Coordinated Community Supports**
- **Member – Apprenticeship 2030 Commission**