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Legislative District 26
Prince George's County

DEPUTY MAJORITY WHIP

Education, Health, and
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Joint Committee on Gaming Oversight



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*The 2021 End-of-Session Report for the
442nd session of the Maryland General Assembly*

Dear Friends:

The 2021 Legislative Session has concluded. It is my honor to bring to you some of the remarkable things we've accomplished as a body with your input and support. To say that this session was challenging would be an understatement. We worked through nearly 100% virtual meetings with you, the constituent, isolation glass on the Senate Floor and Committee rooms, limited staff, and time away from our families. By working together and with your patience, we were able to make a successful session possible. There's still plenty of work left to be done, and I promise to get started on unfinished business right away to have a head start on the 443rd session of the Maryland General Assembly.

The report that I share with you will highlight a list of legislative bond initiatives, key statewide legislation, my bills that were passed, and Prince George's County local bills that will have the most substantive impact on the state of Maryland. It is not an exhaustive list of the bills that were passed in this session. As a member of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, I was in a privileged position to hear, weigh in and vote on a wide range of bills that affect our district.

The Legislative Session began early for me. Over the summer of 2020, I was tapped to be a part of a 7-member Workgroup on Equity, Inclusion, and Environmental Justice, particularly as they relate to Black and Brown Marylanders. Our task was to identify injustices or deficiencies in these areas and make solutions to repair them. The Workgroup produced 47 significant recommendations, to which all were introduced as proposed legislation in this legislative session. I am very proud of the work and results that this group produced.

This year's session, we were limited to sponsoring only 25 bills; I took full advantage. The Prince George's County Delegation was hard at work pushing ahead initiatives that were advantageous to the County as a whole. Issues concerning Maryland State Route 210 continued to be a priority of mine. The community's concerns were shared with Maryland State Highway Administrator Tim Smith in a meeting back in November of 2020. Mr. Smith vowed to work hard to make Route 210 a safe roadway for all who traverse it. My office presented to SHA several practical recommendations for improving traffic and pedestrian safety. Since this meeting, SHA implemented several recommendations and continues to assess other recommendations presented at the meeting. Follow-up meetings with SHA regarding Route 210 are planned.

Finally, District 26 residents encountering problems with their unemployment insurance were troubling. My office handled nearly 200 complaints pertaining to the Department of Labor and their unemployment insurance protocol. This continues to be an issue but has been reduced, and the legislators are collectively addressing the problem through legislation to ensure these problems are minimal in the future.

Thank You - I would be remiss if I didn't thank all of you for your continued support, prayers, letters, emails, calls, and text messages to offer advice, avail me of an issue, or to simply say hello. Everyday single day I wake up, I realize how lucky and blessed I am to be your representative in the State of Maryland—something I do not take for granted.

Debbie Patterson



Summary of the 2021 End-of-Session Report

Key Statewide Legislation

SB496 – The Maryland Relief/Recovery package brought financial relief for millions of Maryland residents and small businesses suffering from the Covid-19 pandemic. The State has established the Recovery Now Fund and programs like:

- 83 million to erase household utility debt; and
- \$279 million for small business support
- 40,000 Marylanders who were stuck waiting for their unemployment insurance were able to receive an additional \$1,000.00
- Expands eligibility of both the EITC and Child Tax Credit (SB218) to all taxpaying Marylanders to ensure all who contribute to our State can access these vital credits
- Repeals all state and local income taxes on unemployment benefits of for tax years 2020 and 2021;
- Provides small businesses with sales tax credits of up to \$3,000 per month for three months;
- Safeguards Maryland business owners against any tax increase triggered by the use of state loan or grant funds; and
- Includes \$500 million in new funding for programs and grants for businesses and nonprofits, housing, health, unemployment insurance, energy assistance, education, and human services

SB0001 / HB0001 – The Historically Black Colleges and Universities Funding is an emergency bill provides an additional \$577.0 million (in total) of general funds for Maryland's historically black colleges and universities (Bowie State University, Coppin State University, Morgan State University and the University of Maryland – Eastern Shore) from fiscal 2023 through 2032 to be distributed and used as specified.

SB0218 – The Child Tax Credit & Expansion of the Earned Income Credit bill alters the calculation of the Maryland earned income credit to allow certain residents to claim the credit; allows certain taxpayers with federal adjusted gross income for the taxable year that is \$6,000 or less to claim a credit against the State income tax for each qualified child in an amount equal to \$500 and more.

SB0965 / HB1372 – The Blueprint for Maryland’s Future 2.0 (Revisions to the 2020 bill) is an emergency bill that sets forth a framework for getting our students back on track. The bill funds intensive tutoring and summer school to improve educational outcomes, add money to the State’s base education formula for educational technology, support students’ socio-emotional health, ensure the responsible use of federal funds, and much, much more.

HB940 – The Regulation of Fantasy Gaming Competitions and Implementation of Sports Wagering is a bill that establishes and implements sports wagering in the State and provides for regulation of sports wagering and fantasy gaming competitions - high school and recreation sports are excluded from wagering in this bill. This bill appropriates 1.5 million dollars to Bowie State and Morgan State Universities to establish a Center for the Study of Data Analytics and Sports Gaming at each university. The universities will also study and analyze emerging sports technologies, e-sports, operations management, policy, and regulation and support scholarly inquiry on the dimensions and impacts of gaming to academic, industry, nonprofit, and government audiences.

Generational Reforms to Policing in Maryland where a set of bills that:

- Increase body worn cameras, establish a use of force policy, and provide mental health supports for officers (SB0071);
- Create transparency in the disciplinary process and curtail no knock warrants (SB0178);
- Demilitarize the police and independently investigate police-involved deaths (SB0600);
- Ensure local control of the Baltimore City Police Department (SB0786); and
- Repeal and replace the Law Enforcement Officer’s Bill of Rights, and create a Law Enforcement Scholarship Program (HB0670)

SB0066 – Office of Statewide Broadband is a bill that establishes an Office of Statewide Broadband within the Department of Housing and Community Development to create and implement a statewide plan for broadband expansion, especially in rural areas.

Prince George's County Delegation's Key Legislation

- **Speed Monitoring Systems - Residential Districts PG 302-21 – HB0619**
- **Vehicle Height Monitoring Systems PG 305-21 – HB0626**
- **Alcoholic Beverages - License Sanctions and Sunday Off-Sale Permits PG 317-21 – HB974**
- **Public Safety and Behavioral Health Surcharges - Behavioral Health Programs PG 414-21 – HB0977**
- **Public Ethics - Payments and Transfer and Zone Intensification Requests PG 416-21 – HB980**
- **Tax Sales - Limited Auction PG 413-21 – HB981**
- **Payment in Lieu of Taxes Agreements - Low-Income Housing PG 415-21 – HB1010**

Senator Patterson's Key Legislation

SB0127 - Institutions of Higher Education - Use of Criminal History in Admission is a bill that prohibits Maryland colleges and universities from denying an applicant admission into their institution to which they apply based on their criminal background. However, the bill allows for institutions to determine whether to allow campus residency ONLY based on an individual's criminal background.

SB0201 - Expungement of Records is a bill that will AUTOMATICALLY expunge the criminal record after three years of those who were charged with civil or criminal possession of marijuana, "must appear" major traffic offenses, and all other previously eligible criminal offenses that the individual was:

- Found not guilty;
- Dismissed;
- Acquitted of the charge; or
- The charges were dropped (except in cases of drug or alcohol treatment)

.. without the individual having to petition the court, and the expungement is free of charge. Potentially thousands of Marylanders qualify for an expungement of charges from their record but are unaware of this fact, or they are unable to afford an attorney to walk them through the process of obtaining an expungement. At the conclusion of the individual's cases, the court will notify the individual of their right to an expungement after 3-years and that it will be automatic. This notification can also be by mail if the individual is not present in court at their disposition.

SB0661 - Maryland Oil Disaster, Clean-Up, Contingency, and Oil Contaminated Site Environmental Cleanup Fund is a bill that extends the Maryland Oil Disaster, et. al., fund through fiscal years 2022 to 2029. The fund was set to expire on July 1, 2021. This would allow Maryland to continue to reimburse Marylanders who paid for oil cleanup personally and are eligible for reimbursement from the state.

SB0732 - Maryland Innovation Initiative University Partnership Pilot Program is a pilot program under MII for Bowie State University and Frostburg State University to provide funding for technology validation, entrepreneurial activity, and an incentive for industry engagement with the universities.

- The Program starts with two universities, taking into consideration the location of the universities in the state;
- The Program is designed to fund projects on a competitive basis; and
- It ensures MII staff (or third-party consultants) support entrepreneurial initiatives and industrial engagements in pilot institutions

Under the previous law, the program only included the state's research institutions, which does not recognize the entrepreneurial activities that happen at other anchor institutions throughout Maryland. Each university qualifies for 500,000 in funding for grant proposals that they submit under this program.

SB800 – The Inmate Training and Job Act of 2021 (7-year Pilot Program – 2021 - 2028) is a bill that mandates that the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Corrections establish a hybrid educational component in its system of in-person and virtual learning formats. The goal is to provide a formal education and/or career technical training for returning citizens who are within 12-months of their release and to follow them up to 2-years after their release. Part of the success of this program is that every returning citizen will have an Individualized Development Plan that is unique to them and designed to aid them in successfully entering back into society.

The Maryland Dept. of Public Safety will coordinate with the Maryland Higher Education Commission and all four Maryland HBCU (Bowie State University, Coppin State University, Morgan State University, and University of Maryland – Eastern Shore) to accomplish this goal and by using college students who will receive a stipend to serve as student mentors. ITJA program will also utilize the faith community and non-profit organizations' services every step of the way to provide support for our returning citizens in behavioral health, housing, food, employment, and other necessities to be sustainable and productive citizens. The goal is to fight recidivism and give our returning citizens hope.

Senator Patterson was granted over 3 million dollars in local Capital Funding Projects for 2021
For additional legislative information, visit the General Assembly's website at mgaleg.maryland.gov