

# Courthouse News

A publication  
of the  
Maryland Association  
of Counties

Volume 30 Number 6

February 25, 2008

## The President Reports

BALTIMORE COUNTY EXECUTIVE JAMEST. SMITH

### *Presiding Officers Meeting*

The second of three planned MACo-coordinated Session meetings with the Presiding Officers, Senate President Mike Miller and House Speaker Mike Busch, was held on February 20. Attending the meeting were MACo President Jim Smith, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Wilson Parran, and Secretary Wayne Cooper, County Executives Jack Johnson, John Leopold, and Ken Ulman, and MACo Executive Director David Bliden.

"Everyone is going to have a very difficult time," explained President Miller, referring to an anticipated March State revenue write-down. Preparing for this write-down, the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee was planning to cut \$300 million from the Administration's proposed budget, he advised. He suggested the cuts "...would not truly impact the counties purse" with "...a number of alternatives" being contemplated, such as adjustments to the GCEI or helicopter replacements. "There are things we can do like phase-in rather than cut."

"March will tell the tale," said Speaker Busch raising the challenges confronting counties such as the decline in recordation and transfer tax revenues and obligations to unions. He noted that State write-downs "past \$125, \$150 million get tougher," with commensurate consideration of the "...delay in some programs..." such as the Chesapeake Bay 2010 Fund, the Special Session health care expansion, and transportation investments.

President Smith noted that counties were facing similar challenges, with Baltimore County not granting any COLA's. In response to the reduction in Thornton funding, Commission President Cooper noted that "[w]e're" getting heat from the school board," which was demanding a 4% COLA. "We're finding efficiencies," added County Executive Ulman, citing the elimination of his county's print shop and cable television studio.

"We're still looking at a large chunk for school construction," President Miller assured, with Speaker Busch adding, "[o]nce the Governor made the \$333 million [commitment] it is hard to back off." And, "community college funding is still looking good."

President Smith raised the OPEB charges to local health departments creating great challenges, referring to the 3000 State

(continued on next page)

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## Legislative Committee Meeting

February 27  
10:30 am

## No Subcommittee Meetings on February 27

### Guest Speakers:

10:30 am David Lever, Executive Director, State School Construction

11:30 am Minority Leaders:  
Senator David R. Brinkley &  
Delegate Anthony O'Donnell

## 2008 Officers

### President James T. Smith

jimsmith@baltimorecountymd.gov

### 1st VP Wilson Parran

parranwh@co.cal.md.us

### 2nd VP David R. Craig

dcraig@harfordcountymd.gov

### Secretary Wayne Cooper

cooperw@charlescounty.org

### Treasurer Robert M. Hutcheson

rhutcheson@allconet.org

## Important Dates!

August 13-16, 2008

Summer Conference, Ocean City

October 22-24, 2008

Adm./Attys. Fall Conference, Annapolis

January 7-9, 2009

Winter Conference, Hyatt, Cambridge

employees in those departments that counties must fund. "It would be a huge help," he said, referring to a suggested deferral of the approximate \$10 million OPEB charge being billed to counties for these State classified employees.

"It's a huge bill," observed President Smith, referring to the Administration's critical area revision proposal, "...which puts a lot of power in the Critical Area Commission." "I am not wedded..." to the bill, responded Speaker Busch.

"We've partnered with them," explained President Smith, raising the joint MACo/MML effort to secure transfer tax authority for both all municipalities and the six counties now lacking the authority. The House is "...fine with it," responded Speaker Busch. President Miller noted the realtors have been "...strongly against" any new transfer tax authority.

"We have to shut them down," said President Miller, regarding slot machines being authorized by counties for non-profit organizations. "They are cannibalizing our lottery system," added Speaker Busch, suggesting this loss affects the State's ability to fund its obligations to counties.

President Miller stressed the importance of the November slots referendum passing, noting there was no further sentiment for State tax hikes. "It's outrageous" that the State teachers union is not getting engaged, he explained. "They are the biggest beneficiaries," responded President Smith, advising, "[w]e're planning to be engaged."

Contact: David S. Bliden

### MACo Legislative Initiative

## Speed Camera Bills Heard

MACo and MML representatives joined several Administration officials in support of legislation that would allow the State to place speed cameras in highway work zones and authorize local jurisdictions to place speed cameras on residential roads and in school zones (SB 269/HB 364). The Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee heard SB 269 on February 19 and the House Environmental Matters Committee heard HB 364 on February 20. The legislation is one of MACo's initiatives for the 2008 session.

The local provisions of the bill are modeled after a Montgomery County speed camera program authorized by legislation enacted in 2006. The bill is authorizing only – a local government must hold a public hearing and pass an ordinance that a jurisdiction can use speed cameras. The cameras are limited to residential roadways with a maximum speed of 45 miles per hour or in school zones. The bill includes specific limitations such as requiring public notice of the location of fixed speed cameras, a 10-mile per hour speed tolerance, an initial warning period before a local government can issue any citations, and the ability to contest a citation in District Court.

Fines are limited to a maximum of \$75, which is identical to the fine for running a red light camera. Like a red light camera citation, a speed camera citation does not become part of a driver's record and cannot be used to assess points, deny the driver auto insurance, or increase the driver's insurance rates. In contrast, a speeding ticket issued by a police officer for going 10 miles per hour over the speed limit assesses a \$90 fine and 2 points (\$140/2 points in an active school zone), with a likely insurance rate increase.

Money earned from speed camera citations would not go into a local government's general fund. Beyond what is necessary to pay for the speed camera program, any revenue earned from speed cameras must go towards related public safety concerns, including pedestrian safety programs. Speed camera vendors are prohibited from being compensated based on the number of citations issued or the revenue generated.

Administration representatives introduced the bill, including those from the Governor's Office and the Maryland Department of Transportation. An expert from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety also testified in support of the bill. Secretary of Transportation John Porcari and Senator James Robey also testified in support of the bill in the Senate.

MACo Executive Director David Bliden and Associate Director Leslie Knapp Jr. represented MACo. They argued that speed cameras provided an important enforcement tool and were shown to reduce both speed and speed-related accidents. They noted that speed cameras allowed police officers to focus on other critical public safety issues besides speeding.

Law enforcement representatives from Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Howard County, Montgomery County, and the Cities of Gaithersburg, Laurel, and

Rockville joined MACo and MML in testifying in support of the bill. Also testifying in support were the Town of Trappe, AAA, the MD Sheriffs' Association, the MD Chiefs of Police Association, the MD Fraternal Order of Police, the MD Highway Contractors Association, and the MD Asphalt Association.

The MD State Police and several community associations submitted written testimony supporting the bill. A few individual citizens testified in opposition to the bill, raising privacy concerns.

Contact: *Leslie Knapp Jr.*

### Local Health Department Budget Crisis Briefing

The Senate Budget and Taxation Committee's Subcommittee on Health, Education, and Human Resources reviewed the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's Community and Family Health Administration budget on February 21. The DLS analysis of the CFHA budget is available online:

[http://mlis.state.md.us/2008RS/budget\\_docs/All/Operating/M00F02 - DHMH Community and Family Health Administration.pdf](http://mlis.state.md.us/2008RS/budget_docs/All/Operating/M00F02-DHMH_Community_and_Family_Health_Administration.pdf)

In the analysis, continuing concern over personnel cost pressures in local health departments was raised; with a substantial excerpt from a January 2008 DHMH report on the subject.

MACo Legislative Director Michael Sanderson testified about the dramatic pressure facing local health departments for FY 2009 arising from increased personnel costs for State employees. "This is a result of having more than 3,000 State employees in local health departments," he explained. "Our local health departments believe this additional cost amounts to around \$25 million, while the State formula funding increases by only \$1.8 million."

He reviewed the potential impact on Wicomico County, discussing the potential for \$1.8 million in new costs. "This is a tax cap county," he observed, "but even if they can make up half of that themselves... that's still close to a million dollars... local health is very personnel intensive... that might be 15 or 20 public health workers."

Contact: *Michael Sanderson*

### Regulation of Scrap Metal Dealers Bill Supported

The Senate Finance Committee heard Senate Bill 521, one of several bills to add new regulation of scrap metal dealers, on February 21. At the hearing, MACo supported the bill, citing increasing rates of property crime tracing to the "easy money" ability for individuals to turn in scrap metal for cash at such dealers.

Several State and local law enforcement officials detailed the wide-ranging problems with theft and vandalism related to insufficient record keeping by scrap metal dealers. MACo Legislative Director Michael Sanderson agreed, noting, "This is a county government issue, but also a community issue," and added, "when the high school bleachers go missing, you see this problem has gone beyond being about copper piping."

MACo also offered amendments to the bill, to incorporate a requirement that scrap metal dealers furnish records to law enforcement agencies via electronic means. That process is encouraged, but not required, under current State law.

Contact: *Michael Sanderson*

### Workers Comp Presumption for Lyme disease Opposed

MACo Legislative Director Michael Sanderson joined a panel of county workers' compensation attorneys opposing HB 855 at its hearing February 20 before the House Economic Matters Committee. The bill would provide a presumption that law enforcement officers with responsibilities in outdoor wooded areas that contract Lyme disease, did so as a result of the work assignment and should be entitled to compensation as an "occupational disease."

Following testimony of proponents, Mr. Sanderson commented "counties do not oppose compensating employees or officers for workplace accidents or illnesses... but we do oppose presumptions in the law that essentially decide the case before it starts." Suzanne Berger from the Baltimore County Office of Law also noted that Lyme disease "...is a health screening issue," and offered, "A better way to address these problems is with better screenings, but not with additional presumptions in the workers' comp law."

Paula Etting from the Harford County Office of Law added concerns that the bill “would allow claims...many years after the time of employment, and the former officer would still get the presumption.”

Contact: Michael Sanderson

## BRAC Legislation to Guide Development, Taxes in Military Zones

MACo and MML joined several other parties in support of House Bill 366; legislation creating additional tools for managing base realignment growth pressures. The Administration bill creates a process for establishing BRAC revitalization and incentive zones, and to enable possible payments in lieu of taxes from federal facilities currently not subject to taxation.

Former MACo President and Frederick County Commissioner Jan Gardner testified at the hearing on MACo's behalf, expressing her interest in “additional tools” to deal with expected pressures from base realignment growth. Numerous county economic development directors also testified in support of the legislation.

Contact: Michael Sanderson

## Briefly

### *\$2,500 College Scholarships*

Two high school seniors will each earn \$2,500 for college from the NACo/Nationwide Scholarship. Winning applicants will have researched the amount of money they will need at retirement and described how secure their financial future for retirement. To be eligible, applicants must be high school seniors or graduates (age 20 and under) who are legal U.S. residents and whose parent or grandparent actively contributes to the NACo 457 Deferred Compensation Plan. Application and entry must be postmarked no later than March 31, 2008. More information is available at [www.naco.org/retirementscholarship](http://www.naco.org/retirementscholarship) or contact Lisa Cole at 202/942-4270.

## Job Openings

**GIS ANALYST - BUREAU OF PLANNING – CARROLL COUNTY** - \$21.24 hourly salary (grade c12) 37.5 hr. position with full benefit package. General responsibilities: provides mapping as well as data creation, management, and analysis to support comprehensive planning processes, activities, and studies within the goals and objectives of the bureau of planning. Essential tasks include the following; other duties may be assigned: Coordinate GIS (Geographic Information Systems) mapping and database projects between the Bureau of Planning and the office of its; Coordinate GIS system software and hardware needs for the bureau; Provide project leadership; Use GIS software to produce, display, and analyze geographic information; Prepare and maintain data bases, maps, reports, statistical information and tables; Assist in the collection and mapping of land use, environmental, and other types of data for comprehensive plans and amendments; Interpret survey drawings, site development plans, subdivision plans, plats, deeds, and other information from applications to GIS files; Coordinate source data between county agencies and related sources; and Use GIS to analyze data related to land uses, water and sewer projects, and other planning project related data. Education and experience: Bachelor's degree in geography, computer science, or related field, with courses geographic information systems and computer mapping; Four years experience in operation and application of geographic information systems; and a comparable amount of training and experience may be substituted for the minimum qualifications. A Carroll County government job application is required for this position and must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. on **March 12, 2008**. To apply on-line, contact [ccgovernment.carr.org](http://ccgovernment.carr.org) or call the Department of Human Resources at (410) 386-2020 to request an employment application. EOE

**CABLE ADMINISTRATOR - HOWARD COUNTY** - The Cable Administrator is appointed by and reports to the County Executive and confirmed by the County Council. The Cable Administrator is responsible for the day-to-day administration of cable communication operations within Howard County. This position is primarily charged with managing the cable television / franchise administration in accordance with federal law and regulations and County ordinances and perform related duties. The Cable Administrator will have liaison responsibilities to the County Council and established

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community access organizations, the Cable Advisory Committee and other related neighborhood groups. (For a more detailed job description, please contact Eileen Weber at 410-313-2013.) Salary Range: \$59,238-\$95,555; Deadline: **March 31, 2008**. Please submit resume with cover letter to: Howard County Government, c/o Human Resources, 3430 Court House Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043

**GENERAL ROADS SUPERINTENDENT – ROADS DEPARTMENT - GARRETT COUNTY** - This is an executive position for the administration of the daily operation of the Garrett Co. Roads Dept. consisting of 130 employees. Essential Duties and Responsibilities: Administer daily operation of Co. Roads Dept.; Develop and implement policies/procedures to improve operations; Effectively provide management of Human Resources; Develop/implement long range goals and objectives to ensure longevity of County Roads Systems and Bridge structures, as well as a replacement program for equipment; Prepare County Roads fiscal budget and insure compliance within the approved budget through provisions of the cost estimates and analysis; Knowledge and development of financial reports for Board of County Commissioners and County Administrator; Determine and plan for the most cost effective method of construction and maintenance for County Roads, Bridge Structures, and Equipment; Address public concerns and complaints via oral or written form; Assist County Administrator in negotiation of the Union Contract; Provide for application of terms within the bargaining unit agreement; Conduct informative meetings conducive to addressing and resolving concerns with the County Roads workforce; Strong knowledge of construction management to supervise and/or understand various road and bridge projects; and other duties may be assigned. Qualifications: To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty exceptionally. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. Education and/or Experience: Bachelor's degree (B.A or B.S) from a four-year college or university in Engineering, Business Administration, or related discipline is required; and Ten (10) years Management experience (outside of government) dealing with non-union/union personnel is preferred. Work Environment: This position requires outdoor activities approximately 75% of the time during a workday. Outside conditions will vary widely depending upon weather conditions.

Weather conditions encountered will be extreme heat, cold, snow, ice, rain, wet/humid, dry/dusty, wind, sunshine, and various odors. Work tasks may be performed in close proximity to moving equipment, vehicles and parts with times of noisy conditions. Safety of staff and the public is first priority. The work environment characteristics described are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. Application Process: A Garrett County Government application along with a letter of interest and resume is required. Qualified individuals may apply by forwarding all required documentation to Garrett County Government, Office of Human Resources, 203 South Fourth Street, Room 206, Oakland, MD 21550. Applications are available at this address or will be mailed by calling (301) 334-8975. Applications are also available on our website at [www.garrettcounty.org](http://www.garrettcounty.org). Deadline for application is **March 28, 2008**. Garrett County Government is an EOE. Qualified applicants are considered without regard to race, color, creed, religion, gender, national origin, age, marital status, or the presence of a non-job related medical condition or handicap.

**PLANNING DIRECTOR - CHARLES COUNTY** - Located in Southern Maryland (pop. 145,000), 71 miles south of Baltimore and 32 miles southeast of Washington, D.C., is seeking applicants for a Planning Director. The County has a total operating and capital annual budget of \$519 Million with 700 full time employees. The Planning Director will manage the Planning Division and serve as a Division Chief in the County's Dept. of Planning & Growth Management. The Planning Director will manage and direct the county's land use planning and related issues. This position provides advice to the Board of County Commissioners, Board of Appeals, and Planning Commission on planning/zoning issues. This individual will assist in the decision making process; provide leadership and direction for planning, zoning and code enforcement activities for local County government; manage the review of all development-related proposals for conformance with the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Regulations, Critical Areas, Forest Conservation and Historic Preservation regulations. Interpret, administer and negotiate issues related to comprehensive planning, facilities planning and environmental regulations and policy. This individual will serve on various committees

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and represent the County Commissioners in presentations. The county government is implementing plans and policies that will focus future growth in the Waldorf Development District, favor future passenger rail transit and mixed-use, transit-oriented development, and protect the rural areas of the County from sprawl development. Minimum qualifications include a Master's Degree in Planning and six years of progressively responsible professional planning experience, or an equivalent combination of education, training and experience. Knowledge of principles and practices of land use planning required. Salary range: \$76,367 to \$123,186. Starting salary based on qualifications. Offering excellent benefits including a defined benefit pension plan, deferred compensation, generous leave and health care programs. Employee Pension Plan honors portability of prior eligible Maryland State and local government service in other defined benefit pension plans. Apply on line at [www.charlescounty.org](http://www.charlescounty.org), or submit application and resume to the HR Dept., Charles Co. Gov't. Building, POB 2150, La Plata, MD 20646. Position is open until filled; for best consideration apply by **February 29, 2008**. Prior applicants do not need to reapply. EOE; minority and female applicants are encouraged to apply.

### **ENGINEER II (SOLID WASTE) BUREAU OF SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT, DEPT. OF PUBLIC WORKS, BALTIMORE COUNTY**

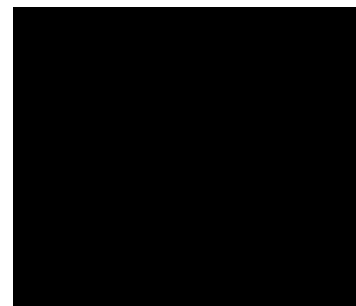
- Min. Qualifications: Bachelor's Degree in Engineering and two years engineering experience (Qualifying education may be substituted for experience) or P.E. license. Various and diverse office and field duties involving engineering, environmental monitoring, and regulatory compliance associated with operations and construction projects at one active sanitary landfill, as well as at closed landfills and other solid waste facilities. 35 hour work week. \$46,684 to \$58,032, with longevity steps to \$74,142.

**Open until filled.** For more information about County benefits, or to obtain a job description and/or an application, please visit our website at <http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/humanresources/jobs/index.html> Contact Stephen G. Lippy, P.E., DEE, 410-887-2009, or email [slippy@baltimorecountymd.gov](mailto:slippy@baltimorecountymd.gov) (r7/08)

### **COUNTY ENGINEER - DEPT. OF PUBLIC WORKS - WORCESTER COUNTY**

- \$85,000 – \$100,000 / DOQ - Nestled between the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean lies Maryland's only seaside county offering a unique blend of our Ocean City resort and the country ambience in central and southern communities.

The Worcester County Commissioners are accepting applications for the County Engineer position in Snow Hill, MD. Reporting to the Public Works Director, this full-time, salaried position provides direct oversight of the newly created Engineering & Construction Division of Public Works, tasked with directing all technical design and construction quality aspects of improvements (including capital) for departments within County (except for the Board of Education). The successful candidate will be a Registered Professional Engineer (MD) with a minimum of 5 years progressively responsible management experience in an engineering/construction field; have working knowledge of laws, regulations and ordinances pertaining to Public Works and possess above average oral and written communication skills necessary to prepare reports, prepare and deliver public presentations, provide leadership and motivation to division employees, communicate effectively and courteously with coworkers and the general public. Additional requirements include a valid driver's license and driving record of less than 4 points (MD) with the ability to travel to countywide locations and satisfactory background check. In addition to salary we offer an exceptional benefits package. A job description is available at [www.co.worcester.md.us](http://www.co.worcester.md.us). Qualified candidates may apply in confidence on or before **February 29, 2008**, by submitting a resume with cover letter summarizing experience and salary requirement to Worcester County Human Resources Dept., Gov't. Center, Room 1301, 1 West Market Street, Snow Hill, MD 21863 or email to [humanresources@co.worcester.md.us](mailto:humanresources@co.worcester.md.us) EOE



## **Annual Winter Conference**

**January 7-9, 2009**

**Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Hotel  
Cambridge - Dorchester County**

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### Legislative Committee Report

February 20, 2008

#### **TAXES AND REVENUES**

HB 1302 - PROPERTY TAX CREDIT – PROGRAMMABLE THERMOSTATS (Delegates Jennings and Morhaim) (Ways and Means) – OPPOSE

HB 1424 - COUNTIES AND MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS – TRANSFER TAX (Delegate Barve, et al) (Ways and Means) – SUPPORT

#### **FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION**

HB 891/SB 467 - PROPERTY TAX – ASSESSMENT APPEAL PROCEDURES (Delegate Ross, et al) (Ways and Means) (Senator Peters, et al) (Budget and Taxation) – OPPOSE

HB 892/ SB 466 - PROPERTY TAX ASSESSMENT APPEALS – DUE DATE FOR PAYMENT AND STAY OF COLLECTION (Delegate Ross, et al) (Ways and Means) (Senator Peters, et al) (Budget and Taxation) – OPPOSE

HB 1058 - HOMESTEAD TAX CREDIT – ADJACENT LOTS (Delegate Carr, et al) (Ways and Means) – OPPOSE

HB 1180 - HOMESTEAD PROPERTY TAX CREDIT – APPLICATIONS (Delegate Kach) (Ways and Mean) – OPPOSE

HB 1211/ SB 854 - TAX SALES – MINIMUM TAX DUE – REDEMPTION PAYMENTS – REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES ON REDEMPTION (Delegates Oaks and McIntosh) (Ways and Means) (Senator Jones, et al) (Senate Rules) – SUPPORT

SB 760 - HOMESTEAD PROPERTY TAX – RESIDENCE OF HOMEOWNER'S FAMILY MEMBER (Senator Stone) (Budget and Taxation) – OPPOSE

#### **EDUCATION**

HB 285/ SB 96 - EDUCATION – TRUANCY RATES – POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORT PROGRAMS AND BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION PROGRAMS (Delegate Kaiser, et al) (Ways and Means) (Senator Pugh, et al) (Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs) – NO POSITION

HB 1319 - EXPANDED EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (Delegate Hucker, et al) (Ways and Means) – OPPOSE

SB 850 - EDUCATION – COLLECTIVE BARGAINING – PUBLIC SCHOOL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD (Senator Pugh, et al) (Senate Rules) – OPPOSE

#### **BUSINESS AFFAIRS**

HB 1305 - BURGLARY AND ROBBERY ALARM SYSTEMS – RESPONSE VERIFICATION – REQUIREMENTS (Delegate Hubbard, et al) (Economic Matters) – SUPPORT

#### **COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

HB 1415 - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – ONE MARYLAND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TAX CREDITS – ELIGIBILITY (Delegate Cane, et al) (Ways and Means) – NO POSITION

#### **PLANNING & ZONING**

HB 1192 - LAND USE – DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AGREEMENTS (Delegate G. Clagett) (Environmental Matters) – OPPOSE

HB 1253/ SB 844 - CHESAPEAKE AND ATLANTIC COASTAL BAYS CRITICAL AREA PROTECTION PROGRAM – ADMINISTRATIVE AND ENFORCEMENT PROVISIONS (The Speaker (By Request – Administration), et al) (Environmental Matters) (The President (By Request – Administration), et al) (Senate Rules) – HOLD

### Impact Bills

February 21, 2008

*NOTES: - The summaries of the bills listed below are taken directly from the synopsis provided by the Department of Legislative Services. When reporting on specific bills to the Legislative Committee, staff will make clarifications to the synopsis. MACo refines the list each week, consistent with the organization's by-laws, to bring before the Legislative Committee a list of Action Bills that represent opportunities for county input and effect. Visit [www.mdcounties.org](http://www.mdcounties.org) for daily updates about legislation impacting county government.*

#### **FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION**

HB 1470 - SPECIAL TAXING DISTRICTS – RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY – PROHIBITION – PROPERTY TAX CREDIT (Delegate Frush, et al) (House Rules and Executive Nominations) - Prohibiting a county from creating a special taxing district that includes residential property or modifying an existing special taxing district to include residential property; requiring a county to grant a property tax credit against the county property tax imposed on residential property within a special taxing district equal to the amount of the special taxing district assessment imposed on the residential property; applying the Act to tax years beginning after June 30, 2008; etc. Preliminary analysis: local government mandate EFFECTIVE JUNE 1, 2008

SB 911 - LAND BANK AUTHORITIES – ESTABLISHMENT BY COUNTIES (Senator McFadden) (Senate Rules) - Authorizing a county to establish a land bank authority by ordinance; requiring an ordinance establishing an authority to include specified articles of incorporation; requiring specified articles of incorporation to be filed, accepted, and amended in a specified manner; authorizing a county creating an authority to take specified actions by ordinance; providing for the disposition of property and obligations of the authority on termination; etc. EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2008

#### **EDUCATION**

HB 519/ SB 933 - PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS – GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS – WEIGHTED NUMERICAL ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

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(Delegate Walker, et al) (Ways and Means) (Senator Harrington, et al) (Senate Rules) - Requiring the State Board of Education to establish a weighted numerical assessment system to calculate a total score that students are required to achieve to graduate from a public high school in the State; requiring the weighted numerical assessment system to include specified categories; requiring that the weighted values of specified categories may not be outside specified ranges of specified percentage values of a specified total score; etc. EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2008

HB 1486 - EDUCATION – MARYLAND SCHOOL–BASED WELLNESS PROGRAM (Delegate Tarrant, et al) (House Rules and Executive Nominations) - Establishing the Maryland School–Based Wellness Program in the State Department of Education; requiring the State Superintendent of Schools or a designee to develop, implement, and administer the Program in consultation with a specified advisory board; authorizing the State Superintendent to accept specified grants and donations; establishing the Advisory Board on School–Based Wellness Initiatives; establishing the Maryland School–Based Wellness Program Fund; etc. EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2008

SB 912 - EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION – CHILDREN IN MILITARY FAMILIES (Senator Dyson, et al) (Senate Rules) - Altering eligibility requirements for publicly funded prekindergarten programs to allow specified children in specified military families to attend the programs. Preliminary analysis: local government mandate EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2008

### **ELECTIONS**

HB 1502 - ELECTIONS – INSTANT RUNOFF METHOD OF VOTING (Delegate Hixson) (House Rules and Executive Nominations) - Establishing an instant runoff method for casting and tabulating votes in the State; establishing procedures, standards, and requirements relating to the implementation of an instant runoff method of voting; requiring the State Board of Elections and local boards of elections to take specified actions to accommodate and implement an instant runoff method of voting; requiring the State Board to adopt specified regulations; etc. Preliminary analysis: local government mandate EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2009

### **ENVIRONMENT**

HB 1509 - MARYLAND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICE – ENERGY GENERATION PROJECTS (Chair, Economic Matters Committee and Chair, Environmental Matters Committee (By Request – Departmental – Environmental Service, Maryland)) (House Rules and Executive Nominations) - Authorizing the Maryland Environmental Service to engage in energy products and services; authorizing counties and municipalities to enter into specified agreements with the Service without regard to specified limitations or provisions of law; etc. EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2008

SB 883 - VOLUNTARY CLEANUP PROGRAM – ENFORCEMENT AND OVERSIGHT – REQUIREMENTS (Senator Stone) (Senate Rules) - Requiring a description of a proposed voluntary cleanup project to include start and end dates; requiring the Department of the Environment to schedule and hold a specified meeting; requiring specified notice; requiring the Department to conduct regular inspections of a specified site to ensure that the participant is implementing the action plan and that the action plan is achieving the cleanup criteria; requiring the Department to

## Your Source for Legislative Information

[www.mdcounties.org](http://www.mdcounties.org)

[Recent Committee Action](#) - bills and positions taken by the MACo Legislative Committee at their last meeting.

[Bills Position Summary](#) - all positions taken on bills by the Committee.

[Bills Pending Review](#) - bills pending review by the Committee at their next meeting.

[All Impact Bills](#) - all bills impacting local government.

[Major Issues Summary](#) – MACo initiative bills and other significant county government legislation.

[Testimony](#) – submitted testimony to G.A. Committees.

[Buddy System](#) – overview of MACo’s grassroots advocacy system.

### **Issue Areas for Staff**

#### Legislative Director Michael Sanderson:

Taxes & Revenues  
Finance  
Business Affairs  
Intergovernmental Relations  
Health  
Transportation and Public Works  
Human Services  
Elections  
Parks & Recreation  
Employee Benefits

#### Associate Director Les Knapp:

Planning and Zoning  
Community and Economic Development  
Environment  
Education  
Public Safety and Corrections  
Government Liability and Courts  
Public Ethics and Information  
Employee Relations

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take any enforcement action necessary to ensure the clean up of the eligible property; etc. EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2008

## **HEALTH**

**HB 1503** - CERTIFICATE OF NEED – HOSPITAL CLOSURE (Kent County Delegation) (House Rules and Executive Nominations) - Requiring a certificate of need for hospital closures in counties with fewer than three hospitals; and repealing a requirement for a public hearing. EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2008

## **PARKS & RECREATION**

**SB 915** - TASK FORCE ON THE FUTURE CONSERVATION OF MARYLAND'S OPEN SPACE AND FARMLAND (Senator Middleton) (Senate Rules) - Establishing a Task Force on the Future of Conserving Maryland's Open Space and Farmland; providing for the membership, chair, and staff of the Task Force; prohibiting a member of the Task Force from receiving compensation; authorizing a member of the Task Force to receive reimbursement for specified expenses; requiring the Task Force to make specified evaluations and determinations; requiring the Task Force to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly on or before October 1, 2009; etc. EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2008

## **PLANNING & ZONING**

**SB 927** - ENVIRONMENT – SEWAGE SLUDGE UTILIZATION – ZONING AND LAND USE REQUIREMENTS (Senator Jacobs) (Senate Rules) - Prohibiting the Department of the Environment from issuing a sewage sludge utilization permit for a site unless the site meets all county zoning and land use requirements or ordinances. EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2008

## **PUBLIC SAFETY & CORRECTIONS**

**HB 531/ SB 917** - CATASTROPHIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES – QUARANTINE ORDERS – ARREST WITHOUT WARRANT AND CITATIONS (Delegate Dumais) (Judiciary) (Senator Forehand) (Senate Rules) - Authorizing an arrest without a warrant for failing to comply with a specified health emergency quarantine order; authorizing a police officer to issue a citation for failing to comply with a specified health emergency quarantine order; etc. EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2008

# Statewide Hearing Schedule

## **TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 26**

1:00 p.m. APP – House 120 – HB 359 – Local Correctional Facilities – Inmate Health Care Expenses – Payment Rates to Health Care Providers  
1:00 p.m. JUD – House 100 – HB 643 – Costs – Circuit Courts and District Court – Failure to Appear or Violation of Probation  
1:00 p.m. FIN – MSB 3E – SB 743 – Workers' Compensation – Law Enforcement Officers – Lyme Disease Presumption

## **WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27**

1:00 p.m. ENV – House 250 – HB 369 – Chesapeake Bay 2010 Trust Fund and Nonpoint Source Fund  
1:00 p.m. HGO – House 240 – HB 865 – Government Efficiency and Streamlining Operations

1:00 p.m. B&T – MSB 3W – SB 91 – Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act of 2008

1:00 p.m. B&T – MSB 3W – SB 206 – BRAC Community Enhancement Act

1:00 p.m. B&T – MSB 3W – SB 527 – Spending Mandate Relief Act

1:00 p.m. JPR – MSW 2E – SB 688 – Foreclosures – Unpaid Water and Sanitary Charges - Prohibition

## **THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 28**

11:00 a.m. APP – House 120 – HB 101 – Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act of 2008

1:00 p.m. W&M – House 130 – HB 612 – Property Tax Assessment – Commercial Waterfront Property

1:00 p.m. W&M – House 130 – HB 1180 – Homestead Property Tax Credit - Applications

11:00 a.m. APP – House 120 – HB 1194 – Spending Mandate Relief Act

1:00 p.m. W&M – House 130 – HB 1256 – Homestead Property Tax Credit

1:00 p.m. W&M – House 130 – HB 1424 – Counties and Municipal Corporations – Transfer Tax

## **MONDAY, MARCH 3**

2:30 p.m. ECM – House 230 – HB 1305 – Burglary and Robbery Alarm Systems – Response Verification - Requirements

## **WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5**

1:00 p.m. JUD – House 100 – HB 1134 – Immunity from Liability – Medical Emergency – Use of Automated External Defibrillator

1:00 p.m. ENV – House 250 – HB 1192 – Land Use – Development Rights and Responsibilities Agreements

## **THURSDAY, MARCH 6**

1:00 p.m. W&M – House 130 – HB 891 – Property Tax – Assessment Appeal Procedures

1:00 p.m. W&M – House 130 – HB 892 – Property Tax Assessment Appeals – Due date for Payment and Stay of Collection

1:00 p.m. W&M – House 130 – HB 1058 – Homestead Tax Credit – Adjacent Lots

1:00 p.m. W&M – House 130 – HB 1211 – Tax sales – Minimum Tax Due – Redemption Payments – Reimbursement of Expenses on Redemption

1:00 p.m. B&T – MSB 3W – SB 662 – Agricultural Land Transfer Tax – Rates and Distribution of Revenue

1:00 p.m. B&T – MSB 3W – SB 760 – Homestead Property Tax – Residence of Homeowner's Family Member

## **FRIDAY, MARCH 7**

1:00 p.m. ENV – House 250 – HB 625 – Forests and Parks – Special Funds and Accounts – Payments to Counties

## **TUESDAY, MARCH 11**

1:00 p.m. W&M – House 130 – HB 838 – Property Tax – Electric Generating Facilities

1:00 p.m. W&M – House 130 – HB 1302 – Property Tax Credit – Programmable Thermostats

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## Courthouse News

February 25, 2008

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### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12

1:00 p.m. HGO – House 240 – HB 319 – Local Government – Procurement – Resident Preferences

1:00 p.m. JUD – House 100 – HB 1341 – Courts – Nonprofit Associations – Standing to Participate in Government Proceedings

1:00 p.m. JPR – MSW 2E – SB 579 – Immunity from Liability – Medical Emergency – Use of Automated Defibrillator

1:00 p.m. JPR – MSW 2E – SB 596 – Courts – Nonprofit Associations – Standing to Participate in Governmental Proceedings

1:00 p.m. JPR – MSW 2E – SB 687 – Courts – Nonprofit Associations and Homeowners Associations - Standing

### TUESDAY, MARCH 18

1:00 p.m. W&M – House 130 – HB 1319 - Expanded Early Childhood Education



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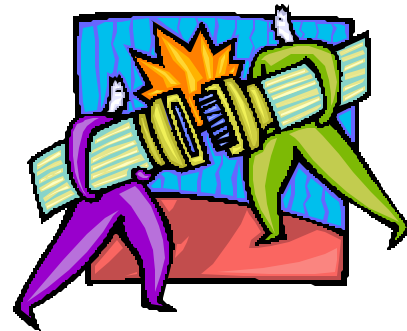
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