

END OF SESSION

2023 Newsletter

Dear Friends & Neighbors,

I am proud to inform you that the Maryland General Assembly's 445th session has come to a successful close. Working together with our new Governor, we ensured that this session was extremely productive for all Marylanders. I am confident that my hard work this session will benefit all my constituents in so many ways, and I proudly share this end-of-session newsletter with you.



DALYA ATTAR

DELEGATE, DISTRICT 41

By Authority of: Dalya Attar for Baltimore, Sara Goldfeiz, Treasurer

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BUDGET

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11

PUBLIC SAFETY

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BUDGET

As your representative, it is my duty to ensure the State is being fiscally responsible while ensuring your needs are met.

I am therefore proud to announce the State's Fiscal Year 2024 Operating Budget passed with record funding. This year's budget secures our State's financial future while continuing to make critical investments in Maryland's economy as well as our transportation, education, technology sector, infrastructure, and physical and behavioral health sectors to support working Marylanders and their families.



THE BUDGET:

- Funds continued cost-of-living raises so we can provide competitive salaries and recruit and retain great workers as we seek to rebuild state government and fill record vacancies across our state agencies.
- Continues to make record investments in education so every student has a chance to succeed.
- Includes new behavioral health investments so we can better address the mental health crisis in Maryland.
- Makes continued investments in enhancing the child tax credit and expanding other benefits that support Marylanders in need to lift families out of poverty and support our working families.
- Prioritizes the development and utilization of renewable energy and other important steps to reach our goal of a clean, sustainable environment.

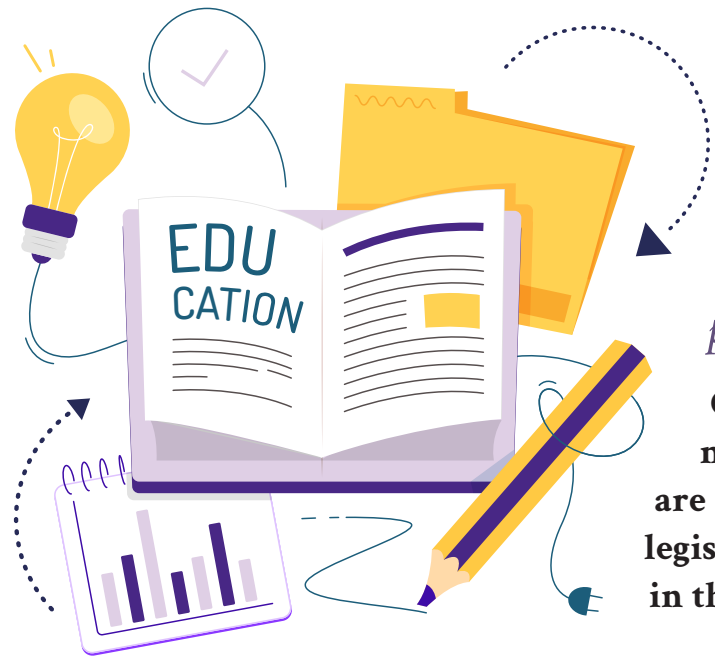
FUNDING FOR PROJECTS IN DISTRICT 41

A crucial part of the budget is ensuring there is funding for projects in the 41st District.

My colleagues in the 41st District, Senator Carter, Delegate Bridges, Delegate Rosenberg, and I strongly advocated for many of the requested projects and I am so proud to announce that we were successful in securing millions of dollars in funding for our district!



- Edmondson Village Shopping Center **\$2 million**
- Choo Smith Youth Empowerment **\$750,000**
- Construction of new Enoch Pratt Free Library branch in Park Heights **Combined investment of more than \$11 million in Federal, State, and City funds**
- Cheder Chabad Fitness and Rec Center **\$50,000**
- Cylburn Nature Center **\$100,000**
- Dickey Hill Elementary School Auditorium **\$171,500**
- Fairmount Park Neighborhood Lighting **\$80,000**
- Hillside Park **\$250,000**
- Liberty Grace Teaching Kitchen **\$100,000**
- The Economic Empowerment Coalition **\$350,000**
- Tiferes Golda, Inc. **\$75,000**
- Yale Heights Park **\$50,000**
- Forest Park Renaissance **\$50,000**
- LifeBridge Health – Cancer Treatment Center at Sinai Hospital **\$1.5 million**
- The Associated: Jewish Federation of Baltimore for the Park Heights Campus Expansion and Renovation **\$500,000**



EDUCATION

Ensuring all our students receive the best education possible is a top priority of mine.

Our children are our future – and that is not just a cliché statement; our children are literally our future. I therefore worked on legislation and advocated for sufficient funding in the budget for all schools.

HB 185: Nonpublic Schools and Child Care Providers - Corporal Punishment – Prohibition

I cosponsored this bill, which prohibits the State board from issuing a certificate of approval to any non-collegiate educational institution that does not have a policy prohibiting a principal, vice principal, or any other employee from administering corporal punishment to discipline a student. Regulations adopted by the State board must prohibit the administration of corporal punishment in a family child care home, large family child care home, or child care center.

HB 375: Coaches - Mental Health Training

It is easy to ignore mental health issues; however, they are very prevalent and affect all types of people. Our students have many stresses that can lead to mental health concerns, and our athletic students are, many times, under even more pressure than others. We must make mental health a priority to protect our athletes, and I am proud to have sponsored a bill that accomplishes this.

House Bill 375 requires each public school in the State and each public institution of higher education that offers an athletic program to provide mental health training to each participating coach. This bill passed the House of Delegates but did not receive a vote in the Senate. I look forward to refile this bill next session and ensuring we are training our coaches in recognizing the indicators of mental illness and behavioral distress in students.

HB 243: Young Readers Program Act of 2023

House Bill 243 moves the Baltimore City Young Readers Program and the Young Readers Matching Grant Program to the State Library Agency and increases the appropriation for the statewide Young Readers Grant Matching Program, which sends a free book every month to children under 5 to enhance reading, literacy and learning readiness at home to families that opt into the program.

SB 610: Primary and Secondary Education - Virtual Education

Senate Bill 610 puts guardrails around how virtual schools operate in Maryland and expands computer and Internet security infrastructure for virtual education. This will better equip the State for high quality virtual education when remote learning is required.

HB 1219: Maryland Educator Shortage Act of 2023

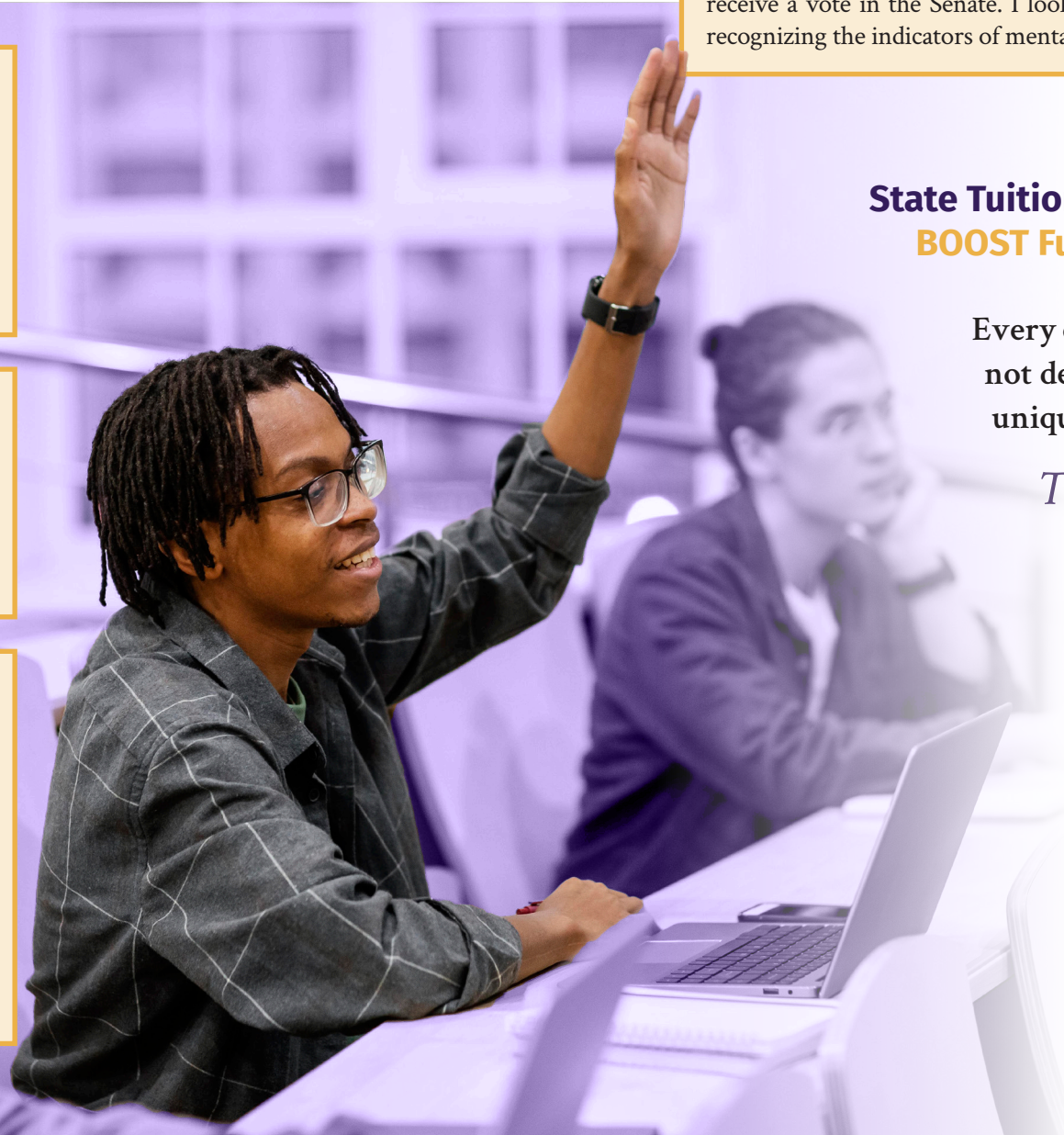
I cosponsored House Bill 1219, which addresses the record vacancies in Maryland’s schools by establishing the Teacher Development and Retention Program as a pilot program to encourage college students to pursue teaching careers. The pilot program will help recruit more diverse teachers by providing stipends for students enrolled in a teacher preparation program at certain HBCUs. The bill also enhances existing programs to recruit and retain new educators, including expanding existing teacher scholarships and reforming the way we qualify childcare providers.

State Tuition Assistance - BOOST Funding

Every child is unique, and the amount of money a parent makes should not determine what school the child attends. The child’s abilities and uniqueness should be the factors determining their school.

The Broadening Options and Opportunities for Students Today program is a scholarship program that helps low-income students pay for non-public school education.

After spending a significant amount of time advocating for this program, I am pleased that 9 million dollars was allocated in this year’s budget. In addition to this funding, 6.5 million dollars was allocated for the non-public schools’ textbook program, 3.5 million for private school enhancements and 6 million dollars for private schools for safety, medical costs and various educational uses.



EDUCATION CONTINUED.**HB 448: Teacher Pay Parity Act**

House Bill 448 requires a nonpublic school where a child is receiving special education services to pay its teachers a salary that is equivalent to the local school salaries, phased in as specified over three years, beginning in 2025. These teachers are public-school funded and should be paid the same salary as their counterparts who teach in public schools.

HB 770: Blueprint for Maryland's Future - Publicly Funded Prekindergarten, Maryland Consortium on Coordinated Community Supports, and Career Ladder

House Bill 770 works to achieve the goals of the Blueprint to ensure that every child has access to high-quality prekindergarten. It expands access to full-day prekindergarten for more students in need by allowing homeless students, income eligible students with disabilities and income eligible students who come from a home in which English is not the primary spoken language to qualify for free full-day Pre-K.

SB 959: Higher Education - Maryland 529 Program - Reform

Senate Bill 959 reforms the Maryland 529 Program to address the program's ongoing issues. It transfers the administration of the 529 program to the Treasurer. This includes all the duties of the existing board, the transfer of the employees - with all their benefits and seniority - and all other powers and duties of the existing program and board.

HB 381: Due Process Proceedings for Children With Disabilities - Burden of Proof

The current process for our families with disabled children to find the best educational fit for their children is extremely burdensome. Finding ways to relieve some of the burden from these families is crucial. I spent a significant amount of time working on this issue and filed House Bill 381 this session, which would shift the burden of proof onto the school system in Baltimore City & Baltimore County. After significant advocacy, the House of Delegates passed the statewide bill that would shift this burden. The Senate did not vote on the bill, and I look forward to continuing this fight next session for all our families with children with disabilities.

I also cosponsored **House Bill 504**, which establishes the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council as an independent unit of State government. The council operates and receives funding in accordance with the federal Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 and among many other duties, it serves as an advocate for individuals with developmental disabilities. ***The Governor signed this bill into law the first day after session!***

HB 1237: Special Education - Judicial Actions - Attorney's Fees and Related Costs

I cosponsored this bill which authorizes a court to award reasonable attorney's fees and related costs, including expert witness fees and costs, to the parent of a child with a disability, if the parent prevails in a proceeding that is held to resolve disputes about the identification, evaluation, or educational placements of children with disabilities or the provision of a free appropriate public education.

HB 525: Outdoor Preschool License Pilot Program

I cosponsored this bill, which establishes an Outdoor Preschool License Pilot Program, administered by the Maryland State Department of Education. The purpose of the pilot program is to license outdoor, nature-based early learning and child care programs in order to (1) expand access to affordable, high-quality early learning and child care programs and (2) investigate the benefits of outdoor, nature-based classrooms.

HB1242 / SB0841: Local School Systems - Student Field Trips - Funding

This bill requires the Governor to include \$500,000 in the annual budget bill for the Maryland State Department of Education to provide grants to local school systems for expenses related to student field trips to museums of cultural import. This includes museums that provide the history and culture of oppressed and historically underrepresented communities, including the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the National Museum of African American History and Culture, the Jewish Museum of Maryland and the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture. ***I sponsored this bill and am proud to report that it passed both Chambers and is now law!***



PIMLICO RACE COURSE



Pimlico is more than just horse racing. It is a place that offers significant potential for our community. Since my first session in Annapolis, I have made the redevelopment of the Pimlico Race Course one of my top priorities.

Our neighborhood deserves to live up to its potential. This redevelopment will not only ensure a safer neighborhood by not leaving this large area vacant, but it will also provide our community with significant revenue, and the multi-use development will serve as a place where our district's families can bring their children.

As a member of the Racing and Gaming subcommittee, I spent a significant amount of time advocating for Pimlico and working to secure a positive outcome for the entire community.

This session we passed Senate Bill 720, Horse Racing - Extension of Maryland Horse Racing Act and Establishment of Maryland Thoroughbred Racetrack Operating Authority, which extends the termination date for the Maryland Horse Racing Act and Maryland Racing Commission by 10 years and establishes a Maryland Thoroughbred Racetrack Operating Authority and a Maryland Racing Operations Fund.

The Maryland Thoroughbred Racetrack Operating Authority is established as an instrumentality of the State, with the stated purpose of maintaining the State as a best-in-class thoroughbred racing venue. This authority will, among other tasks, study and make any recommendations that the authority finds are in the best interests of thoroughbred racing in the State, develop new and existing horse racing and training facilities in the State, and enter into any agreements, leases, partnerships, or contracts necessary to support and sustain Maryland thoroughbred racing and pari-mutual wagering activity.

I am hopeful this new authority will assist in expediting the process to ensure the revitalization of the Pimlico Race Course and surrounding communities, and I look forward to its redevelopment in the near future.

I also sponsored, with Delegate Rosenberg, House Bill 529, Gaming - Video Lottery Terminals - Local Impact Grants and Pimlico

Community Development Authority Membership. This bill alters the distribution of video lottery terminal local impact grants within Baltimore City. From fiscal 2024 to 2032, 85% (instead of 75% under current law) of certain revenues are to be distributed primarily for capital projects benefiting economic and community development in a manner that is consistent with the Park Heights Master Plan.

CANNABIS

HB 556: Cannabis Reform

House Bill 556 creates an equitable licensing, tax and regulation framework for the new cannabis industry. The bill incorporates the best recreational cannabis practices from other states and lessons from the Maryland medical cannabis implementation. The legislation allows license seekers to apply for a combined medical and recreational adult-use license. It includes a low tax rate, which will help discourage an illicit market while still helping fund support for social equity applicants and traditionally disenfranchised communities. It also creates a more equitable application process to give social equity applicants, those who were disproportionately impacted by cannabis prohibition, an equal opportunity to compete for licenses including:

- Low application fees
- Priority consideration in the licensing process
- State provided technical services
- Targeted grants and loans to help jump-start new businesses



HOUSING JUSTICE



HB 36: Proof of Rental Licensure

House bill 36 requires a landlord to have the rental license required by their county before they can go to court to evict a tenant for failure to pay rent, tenant holding over, or breach of lease. A landlord may be exempted from this requirement if they can show the court that the tenant, or administrative error, is causing the lack of licensure. *I sponsored this bill for several years and am proud that it is now law.*

HB 151: Notification of Rent Increase

House bill 151 requires a landlord to tell a tenant about an upcoming rent increase.

For leases over a month, the landlord must notify at least 90 days before, and for a month-to-month lease, a landlord must notify at least 60 days before increasing the rent. A landlord can notify a tenant by mail, or a tenant can opt-in to electronic notification. This type of basic notification will help renters make better housing decisions and budget more effectively.

HB 182: Elimination of Unlawful Restrictive Covenants

House Bill 182 gives localities the ability to purge land records of unlawful restrictions, which had required ownership of the land based on race, religious belief, or national origin. While the language in these land deeds is already illegal and unenforceable, it is directly against our shared values, and it is important to erase it from land records.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Violent crime continues to occur every single day in our neighborhoods, and I will not back down from fighting to combat this. We all deserve to be safe. This is a top priority of mine, and I therefore spent a significant amount of time this session fighting for funding and new laws to address crime.

HB1243/SB0840: Protecting Against Hate Crimes Grant Fund

House Bill 1243/Senate Bill 840 addresses the dramatic increase in hate crimes at our mosques, synagogues, churches and other non-profits and faith-based institutions.

It establishes the Protecting Against Hate Crimes Grant Fund, a special fund administered by the Executive Director of the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services, to provide grants to nonprofit organizations, including faith-based organizations, to provide security enhancements to protect against hate crimes. For fiscal 2025 and each fiscal year thereafter, the Governor must include in the annual budget bill an appropriation of \$5.0 million to the fund.

I sponsored this bill and am proud to announce that this bill passed both chambers and is now law.

HB 159 Third Reading (HB) Calendar No.4
Criminal Procedure - Warrantless Arrest - Straw Purchase Participant (JUD)
Delegate Attar

On Third Reading

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SPEAKER BAKER BUCKEL HINEBAUGH GROSSMAN VALENTINE WIVELL FAIR KERR SIMPSON CILIBERTI MILLER PIPPY BOUCHAT ROSE TOMLINSON GRAMMER LONG, R. METZGAR ARIKAN NAWROCKI SZELIGA ALLEN BHANDARI JACKSON WATSON WU ZIEGLER JONES, A. PHILLIPS WHITE HARRISON	SIMMONS ATTERBEARY GUZZONE TERRASA KAISER MIREK/NORTH QUEEN FOLEY FRASER-HIDALGO OI KORMAN LOVE DARVE PALAKOVICH CARR VOGEL KALMAN SHETTY SOLONON CRITCHFIELD CULLISON STEWART CHARKOUDIAN MOON WALKINS BARNES, B. LEHMAN PENNA-MELNYK HEALEY JOHNSON, S. MARTINEZ WILLIAMS BOAFO GRIFFITH HARRISON LEWIS, J.	BARNES, D. CHARLES TOLES TURNER WALDERRAMA WOODS FISHER HARRIS LONG, J. DAVIS PATTERSON WILSON CROSBY MORGAN, M. MORGAN, T. HOWARD JONES, D. CHRISOLM KIPKE STEWART BARTLETT CHANG ROGERS BAGNALL PRUSKI SCHMIDT JOHNSON, A. JOHNSON, S. MCCOMAS GRIFFITH MORNINGBERG REILLY ARENZ CHRIST JACOBS	ADAMS HUTCHINSON SAMPLE-HUGHES ANDERTON HARTMAN OTTO ACEVERO LOPEZ REZNIK AMREY CONAWAY WELLS ATTAR BRIDGES ROSENBERG GUYTON MANGIONE STONKO BOICE EMBRY FORBES EBERSOLE MCCASKILL RUTH ADKISON SMITH YOUNG CLIPPINGER EDELSON LEWIS, R. FENNELL MEY TAVERAS
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HB 159: Criminal Procedure - Warrantless Arrest - Straw Purchase Participant

Gun violence is killing our children and residents daily in Baltimore. Unfortunately, people are selling handguns to prohibited individuals, who are then using these guns to perpetrate gun violence. I therefore refiled House Bill 159, Criminal Procedure - Warrantless Arrest - Straw Purchase Participant, which would allow law enforcement, without having to obtain a warrant, to arrest individuals who conduct straw purchases. I am proud to announce this bill passed the House of Delegates again. Unfortunately, the bill was not voted on in the Senate. I look forward to continuing advocating for this bill and for it to become law in the future.

HB 13: Hate Crimes – Civil Remedy

House Bill 13 enables victims who have suffered hate crimes to bring a civil action against the person or persons who committed the act, as hate crimes are dangerously increasing in Maryland and the nation. Thirty-three states currently have civil remedy as part of their hate crime law, and Maryland is overdue to join them.

HB 481: Criminal Law – Wearing, Carrying, or Transporting a Handgun – Penalty

I cosponsored this bill, which increases the maximum penalty for a person illegally carrying a handgun from three to five years. This penalty increase was amended into HB 824 which passed both chambers and is now law.

SB 858: Firearm Safety - Storage Requirements and Youth Suicide Prevention (Jaelynn's Law)

Senate Bill 858 strengthens Maryland's gun safety laws and reduces children's unsupervised access to firearms. The bill enhances the penalty for violating the State's safe storage laws. This bill also takes action to help prevent youth suicide by requiring the Deputy Secretary for Public Health Services to develop a youth suicide prevention and firearm safe storage guide.

HB 1244: Maryland Holocaust Remembrance Day

Studies show there has been a significant increase in antisemitic crimes. In an effort to combat antisemitism, I sponsored House Bill 1244, which creates a Maryland Holocaust Remembrance Day on January 27th. This day coincides with the day the troops liberated the Auschwitz concentration camps.

This bill passed both the House of Delegates and Senate unanimously, and the Governor signed it into law the day after the 2023 legislative session ended! This bill is intended to educate Marylanders about the Holocaust. Data suggests there is an alarming increase in the number of people who have no Holocaust education, which correlates with an increase in antisemitism.

HB 1244 Third Reading (HB) Calendar No.77
Delegate Attar et al (HGO)
Maryland Holocaust Remembrance Day

On Third Reading

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SPEAKER BAKER BUCKEL HINEBAUGH GROSSMAN VALENTINE WIVELL FAIR KERR SIMPSON CILIBERTI MILLER PIPPY BOUCHAT ROSE TOMLINSON GRAMMER LONG, R. METZGAR ARIKAN NAWROCKI SZELIGA ALLEN BHANDARI JACKSON WATSON WU ZIEGLER JONES, A. PHILLIPS WHITE HARRISON LEWIS, J.	SIMMONS ATTERBEARY GUZZONE TERRASA KAISER MIREK/NORTH QUEEN FOLEY FRASER-HIDALGO OI KORMAN LOVE DARVE PALAKOVICH CARR VOGEL KALMAN SHETTY SOLONON CRITCHFIELD CULLISON STEWART CHARKOUDIAN MOON WALKINS BARNES, B. LEHMAN PENNA-MELNYK HEALEY JOHNSON, A. JOHNSON, S. MCCOMAS GRIFFITH MORNINGBERG REILLY ARENZ CHRIST JACOBS	BARNES, D. CHARLES TOLES TURNER WALDERRAMA WOODS FISHER HARRIS LONG, J. DAVIS PATTERSON WILSON CROSBY MORGAN, M. MORGAN, T. HOWARD JONES, D. CHRISOLM KIPKE STEWART BARTLETT CHANG ROGERS BAGNALL PRUSKI SCHMIDT JOHNSON, A. JOHNSON, S. MCCOMAS GRIFFITH MORNINGBERG REILLY ARENZ CHRIST JACOBS	ADAMS HUTCHINSON SAMPLE-HUGHES ANDERTON HARTMAN OTTO ACEVERO LOPEZ REZNIK AMREY CONAWAY WELLS ATTAR BRIDGES ROSENBERG GUYTON MANGIONE STONKO BOICE EMBRY FORBES EBERSOLE MCCASKILL RUTH ADKISON SMITH YOUNG CLIPPINGER EDELSON LEWIS, R. FENNELL MEY TAVERAS
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ECONOMY

HB 547: Family Prosperity Act of 2023

I cosponsored House Bill 547, which will reduce childhood poverty and help Maryland families by making the 2021 expansion of Maryland's Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) permanent.

HB 552: Innovation Economy Infrastructure Act of 2023

I cosponsored House Bill 552, which establishes the Build Our Future Grant Pilot Program within the State Department of Commerce to better support technology projects, develop innovation infrastructure, and bring needed jobs across the State. The program will leverage State dollars for grants to businesses, local governments, non-profits, and academic institutions for infrastructure and technology programs. The bill pairs with the existing Innovation Investment Tax Credit and Biotechnology Investment Tax Credit to expand access to capital and bring about significant tech-driven investment in Maryland.

HB 548: Access to Banking Act

I cosponsored House Bill 548, which incentivizes banks to stay in low to moderate income neighborhoods, provide better access to banking and establish and retain new business. This bill establishes the Maryland Community Investment Venture Fund to develop opportunities for banking institutions and credit unions to better serve needs of low to moderate income areas and encourage private investment.

HB 471: RISE Zone

A RISE zone is a geographic area in immediate proximity to a qualified institution and is targeted for increased economic and community development. This bill expands the RISE Zone program, thereby promoting economic development surrounding universities and certain nonprofits. This will also lead to additional jobs and revenues for the local jurisdictions.

I sponsored House Bill 471 this session and am proud to report that this bill passed both chambers unanimously!

HB 546: Serving Every Region Through Vocational Exploration Act of 2023

I cosponsored House Bill 546, which provides access and exposure to public service for young Marylanders by creating a service year option for high school graduates to work for community organizations and nonprofit groups. The program will serve as a springboard for participants to enter post-service year employment, higher education, or apprenticeships. This will create a lifelong culture of service in our young people and our communities across the State. The service year option will incorporate a flexible design to allow for programs that appeal to a broad spectrum of young people with a wide range of career interests.



GOVERNMENT/ FINANCE

HB 58: Maryland State Agency Transparency Act of 2023

House Bill 58 enhances the public access and transparency rules for the Maryland State Ethics Commission. The bill requires that the public parts of the Commission's meeting be web-streamed live for public access.

HB 775: Public Safety – Emergency Management – Consumer Protections Against Price Gouging

House Bill 775 is an anti-price gouging bill, limiting non-seasonal price increases on essential goods and services to 15% during a state of emergency. The bill would also give the governor the power during a state of emergency to designate essential goods and services.

HEALTHCARE

HB 279 / SB 202: Prescription Drug Affordability Board - Upper Payment Limits

House Bill 279 removes the sunset to allow the first-in-the-nation Prescription Drug Affordability Board to continue its work to help lower the cost of prescription drugs for Marylanders.

HB 376: Health Insurance – Diagnostic and Supplemental Examinations for Breast Cancer – Cost-Sharing

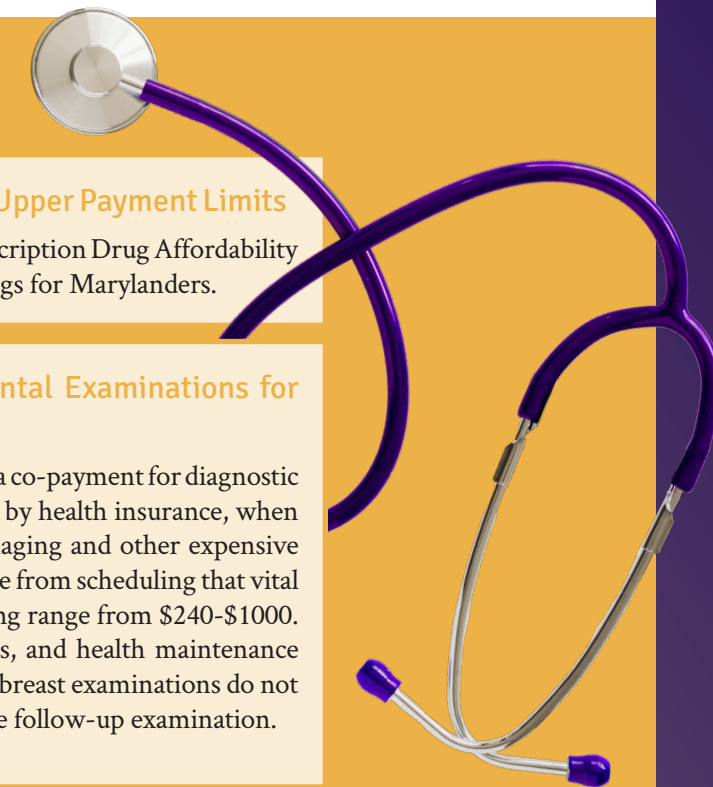
House Bill 376 prohibits health insurers and providers from imposing a co-payment for diagnostic breast examinations. Although screening mammograms are covered by health insurance, when those results indicate an abnormality, the next step is diagnostic imaging and other expensive tests. Far too often, the high cost of the follow-up tests prevents people from scheduling that vital appointment, as the average out-of-pocket cost for diagnostic imaging range from \$240-\$1000. House Bill 376 ensures that insurers, nonprofit health service plans, and health maintenance organizations that provide coverage for diagnostic and supplemental breast examinations do not impose a co-payment, coinsurance, or deductible requirement for the follow-up examination.

HB 148: Behavioral Health Model for Maryland

I cosponsored this bill, which establishes a Commission on Behavioral Health Care Treatment and Access. The purpose of the 38-member commission is to make recommendations to provide appropriate, accessible, and comprehensive behavioral health services that are available on demand to individuals in the State across the behavioral health continuum.

HB 554: Health Care for Heroes Act of 2023

I cosponsored this bill, which reimburses members of the National Guard for their health and dental premiums up to \$60 dollars per month. This first-in-the-nation program will support our National Guard members and is an important recruitment and retention tool for service members.



ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORTATION



HB 9: Transportation Equity

House Bill 9 requires the Maryland Department of Transportation to prioritize ways to achieve equity in transportation when developing overall transportation goals. The department will now be required to develop guidelines, equity analysis policies, and report on the impacts on riders with disabilities and minority groups who may be adversely affected by current transportation policies.

HB 673: Maryland Transit Administration – Fare Price Requirements



HB 673 ensures that Marylanders can access safe, reliable and affordable transit options. The bill will lower mass transit fares by enabling the Maryland Transit Administration to make equitable decisions on raising rates, uncoupling Maryland MTA fares from inflation, as a 2013 law mandated that the MTA tie fares to the Consumer Price Index (CPI), a key measure of inflation. The bill also provides the MTA with the authority to set fares and make adjustments following notice and a public hearing – ensuring a transparent process not directly tied to economic conditions. House Bill 673 will also lower the risk of future fare disputes, which impede on the reliability of our transit system and decrease ridership.

HB 123: HOV Lanes-Plug-In Electric Drive Vehicles

House Bill 123 extends the State program allowing owners of zero-emission vehicles to buy tags to drive in the HOV lane. This will help encourage more consumers to buy electric and cut carbon emissions.

HB 12: Equitable and Inclusive Transit-Oriented Development Enhancement Act

House Bill 12 furthers efforts to cut the cost of carbon emissions and address housing affordability and market expansion by prioritizing transit-oriented development (TOD). The bill establishes a \$5M Transit-Oriented Grant Program for local jurisdictions to aid in TOD design plans, public infrastructure improvements, and for private or public gap funding for development in a TOD. It also requires that TOD is a priority for the Department of Transportation's continued planning.

HB 550: Clean Transportation and Energy Act

I cosponsored House Bill 550, which is a step in the right direction to electrifying transportation and creating climate friendly transportation infrastructure.

This legislation expands commercial truck electrification by increasing the grant fund to \$10M, to pay for up to 75% of the cost difference of buying a zero-emission truck versus a conventional model. The grant program ensures that the recipients primarily operate trucks in Maryland and give preference to a business that impacts the public health, environment, or infrastructure of under-served and overburdened communities.

The bill also increases the electric vehicle charging rebate program from \$1.8M to \$2.5M to encourage more businesses and individuals to install charging infrastructures at their businesses or homes.

HB 486: Task Force to Study Nonpublic Student Bus Transportation

In an effort to address environmental and safety concerns, I sponsored House Bill 486, which establishes the Task Force to Study Nonpublic Student Bus Transportation, to be staffed by the Maryland State Department of Education. The task force must collect information from each local board of education and any other relevant county department regarding nonpublic school student busing programs in the county, other than programs for the transportation of students in special education placements. In addition, the task force must evaluate the impact on State revenues and expenditures, traffic congestion, and environmental and safety goals of the adoption of programs used in other states to provide transportation to nonpublic school students or otherwise reduce the use of passenger vehicles for the transportation of nonpublic school students. This bill passed both chambers, and the task force will begin its work in the near future.

HB 169: Public Utilities - Energy Efficiency and Conservation Programs – Energy Performance Targets and Low-Income Housing

House Bill 169 ensures equity in our energy efficiency program by investing State and federal funds to support weatherization for low-income families who struggle most to pay their utility bills.

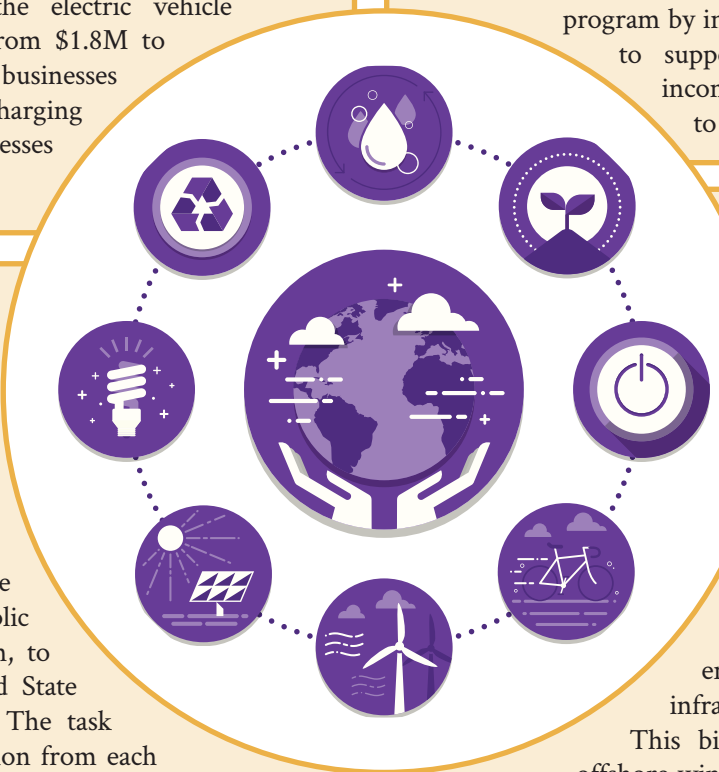
HB 793: Promoting Offshore Wind Energy Resources Act

House Bill 793 increases Maryland's offshore wind capacity and directs the State to find solutions related to transmitting offshore energy to land. To support our transition to a clean energy economy, the rapid deployment of renewable energy and investments in infrastructure must be prioritized.

This bill supports the expansion of offshore wind power by setting an offshore wind goal of 8.5 GW by 2031, initiating a State process to build coordinated transmission infrastructure, and investing in the full build-out of the existing offshore wind lease areas.

HB 908: Electricity – Community Solar Energy Generating Systems Program and Property Taxes

Establishes an equitable community solar program to increase access to renewable energy. Community-based innovative solutions, like community solar, are critical to diversifying our energy portfolio. This bill makes the community solar pilot program permanent with equitable access to renewable energy.





TAXES & BENEFITS

HB 2: Income Tax – Subtraction Modification – Union Dues

House Bill 2 gives a tax deduction to Maryland workers paying union dues. This will ensure we put more money back into the pockets of working families.

HB 180: Income Tax - Subtraction Modification for Adoption Expenses

I cosponsored HB 180, which alters the value of the subtraction modification under the Maryland income tax for the adoption of a child. Specifically, for a taxpayer who adopts a child with a special need, the value of the subtraction increases to \$12,000. For a taxpayer who adopts a child without a special need, the value of the subtraction increases to \$10,000.

HB 1074: Income Tax - Automated External Defibrillator Tax Credit

I cosponsored this lifesaving bill, which authorizes a nonrefundable credit against the State income tax for the first \$500 of the purchase price of an automated external defibrillator (AED) purchased for use at a restaurant in the State. In general, an individual or a business entity that owns a restaurant in the State may claim up to \$1,500 in credit in a taxable year; any unused amount may not be carried over to any other taxable year.

HB 554: Keep Our Heroes Home Act

I cosponsored House Bill 554, which expands the State’s existing tax exemption for military retirement income to encourage more of our military veterans to retire here at home in Maryland. Currently, retirees under age 55 may exempt up to \$5,000 of military retirement income and retirees over age 55 may exempt up to \$15,000. The legislation would eliminate the age distinction and allow for the exemption of up to \$25,000 for the taxable year beginning after December 31, 2022, and \$40,000 for taxable years beginning after December 31, 2023.

HB 982: State Employees – Programs and Scholarships for Human Services Careers and Probation Agents and State Contributions to Supplemental Retirement Plans

House Bill 982 supports our State workers and institutes targeted programs to fill needed positions as we work to lower the historic vacancy rate in our State government. The bill restores the annual supplemental retirement match of \$600 for all participating State employees. For employees who make at least \$600 in contributions to their retirement or have paid down their student loans by at least \$600, the State will contribute \$600 to their retirement. Restoring the supplemental retirement match will help provide relief for those with crushing student loan debt and help them save for future retirement. The bill also creates a program to fill front-line positions at our Department of Human Services by working in partnership with local school systems and community colleges to fill jobs that require a high school degree. The State will then provide tuition assistance and other mentorship opportunities to allow an individual to progress within DHS’s existing personnel structure. Finally, the bill addresses the dangerous vacancy rates at Parole and Probation and the Department of Corrections by providing student loan repayment assistance for our parole and probation agents, who are required to have 4-year degrees.



HB 502: Prevent Electronic Benefits Theft Act of 2023

House Bill 502 makes Maryland the first state in the country to reimburse fraud victims for stolen SNAP benefits. The bill requires the Department of Human Services to automatically restore the benefits of SNAP recipient if shown that the benefits were lost due to theft. The State will use federal funds to help nearly 4,000 Marylanders get back more than \$2.5 million in stolen SNAP benefits.

HB 706: Community Development – Sustainable Communities – Business Facade Improvement Program

House Bill 706 establishes the Business Facade Improvement Program to assist qualified local businesses with improving the outside appearance of their buildings and requires the Department of Commerce to develop an application process for all counties that wish to participate. The ability for older local businesses to keep their commercial districts looking vibrant and appealing is vital to staying competitive, and this bill is an important tool to boost economic development at a time when small businesses continue to struggle with the long-term fallout from the pandemic years and the uncertain economic future ahead.

HB 111 / SB 26: Maryland Medical Assistance Program, Maryland Children’s Health Program, and Workgroup on Low-Income Utility Assistance

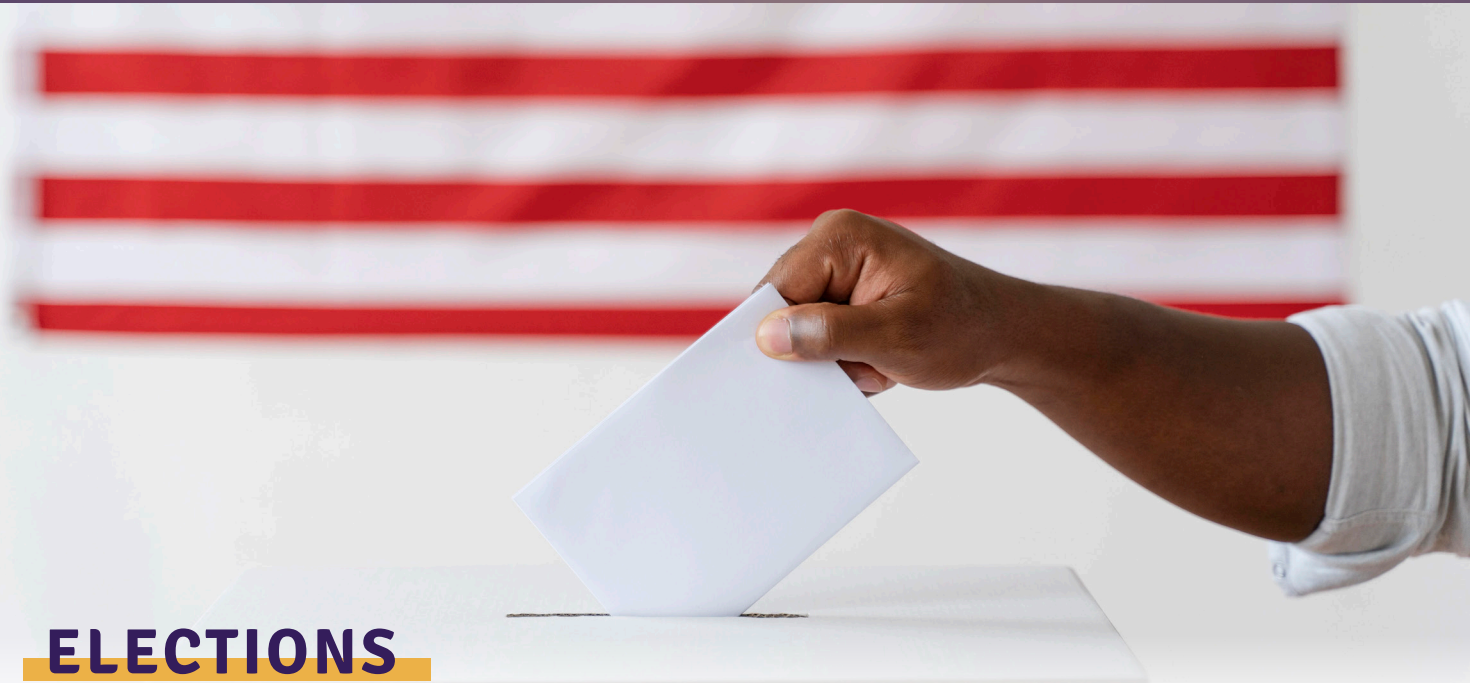
House Bill 111 streamlines the process by which people sign up for safety-net services such as Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and energy assistance programs. By establishing categorical eligibility, one application process will allow an individual to enroll in all services. Streamlining and creating one eligibility process will maximize the number of State residents who qualify for the Program. House Bill 111 will automatically enroll 65,000 SNAP recipients into Medicaid. This timely legislation will also help SNAP recipients already enrolled in Medicaid automatically renew their coverage.

HB 988 / SB 828: Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program – Modifications

House Bill 988 implements the milestone legislation Time to Care Act for paid Family and Medical Leave that was passed last year. The critical modifications in this bill allow Maryland to begin providing the needed time off and partial wage recovery through the state-administered insurance program (the FAMLI fund) funded by both employers and employee, that our workers and families need to care for their newborn children or ailing family members. The bill improves the administration of the Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program by clarifying and altering certain provisions relating to the administration of the Program.

HB 680: Student Loan Debt Relief Tax Credit

House Bill 680 provides increased student loan debt relief to new and existing State workers. The bill extends the time taxpayers have for loan repayment from two to three years. It prioritizes State employees who graduated from institutions with at least 40% student Pell Grant recipients, thereby targeting workers who need the tax credit the most and incentivizes students from colleges and universities that have been historically disenfranchised and overlooked to work in State government. The bill is a key tool in providing financial relief for Marylanders who are burdened with student loan debt and for the broader goal of rebuilding State government by targeting institutions that have been historically overlooked.



ELECTIONS

HB 410: Election Reform Act

I cosponsored House Bill 410, which protects historically disenfranchised communities by ensuring local boards of elections do not implement discriminatory consolidation and closures of in-person voting locations. This bill requires local boards to hold a public meeting before approving the change of a polling place location. The bill also requires the local boards to submit a polling place plan to the State board, which requires the locals to show they follow current law on polling place placement and that the proposed plan will not harm historically disenfranchised communities.

I also filed a bill that would change the 2024 Primary Election Date so it does not conflict with Passover, Easter or Ramadan. In an effort to ensure efficiency, I amended that bill into House Bill 410 and the new 2024 Primary Election Date is therefore now on May 14, 2024!

HB 192: Currency – Campaign Finance Prohibitions – Disclosures by Financial Institutions

House Bill 192 ensures that only U.S. currency can be used to make political contributions. With the rise of cryptocurrency, this bill prohibits untraceable digital currencies in State elections.

HB 535: Ballot Pre-processing and Curing

I cosponsored House Bill 535, which improves the State’s election system by putting ballot curing and pre-processing into law. This bill codifies important regulations that went into effect during the 2020 election to help make administration easier, such as requiring local boards to start ballot canvassing eight days before early voting and giving voters the opportunity to cure a missing signature up to ten days after Election Day.

Maryland is a national leader in voting rights, and as we continue to expand access to the ballot, these procedures are necessary to ensure elections run smoothly.

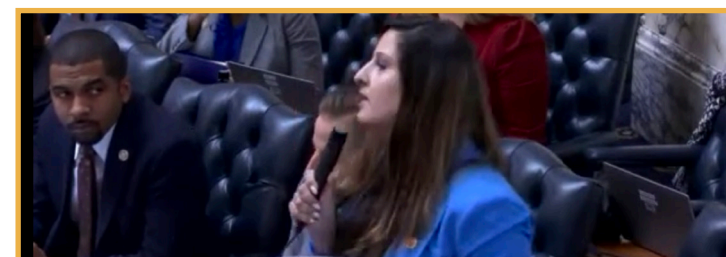
HB 1200: Election Judge Pay Increase

House Bill 1200 requires counties to pay election judges at least \$250 or more per day. Under the bill, returning judges will receive an additional \$100, setting the floor for returning judges at \$350 minimum.

Election judges are the backbone of our democracy. As voting methods, such as mail-in voting, become more popular, the workload for judges continues to increase. This bill will help recruit and retain election judges to keep the election system working efficiently.

Delegate Attar’s College Scholarship

I have been fortunate to be able to award hundreds of students in my district with college scholarships. As someone who worked full time during college and law school and is still left with a significant amount of student loans, I understand how difficult paying for schooling can be, and I want to be sure to help in any way possible. The deadline for submitting scholarship applications for this year was April 30th. I look forward to dispersing thousands of dollars to my constituents again this year for scholarships.





CONSTITUENT ASSISTANCE

As your representative, I have been able to assist so many of you with constituent requests and I am so grateful to be able to do this. Please continue to reach out to me with any concerns or requests for assistance. Cutting through red tape in order to assist you is a top priority of mine.

Thank you for entrusting me to represent you, and I look forward to a successful interim while continuing to work hard on behalf of all my constituents. Please feel free to reach out to me at any time.

My email is dalya.attar@house.state.md.us.

Thank you,

**DALYA
A T T A R**

DELEGATE, DISTRICT 41

By Authority of: Dalya Attar for Baltimore, Sara Goldfeiz, Treasurer