

LEGISLATIVE SYNOPSIS

MARYLAND STATE & DC AFL-CIO

2026

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Maryland
State & DC
AFL-CIO

Who We Are & What We Do

Our Monday night Labor Lobbyists meeting are open to all unions and members. We encourage full participation and the weekly meetings are attended by a wide array of unions throughout Maryland's entire labor landscape.

The State Federation educates attendees and facilitates discussion on bills impacting workers in Maryland. These meetings foster strategic planning with unions presenting bills they are supporting or opposing and asking for all of labor's support to advance labor-friendly legislation.



The Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL-CIO represents more than 700 affiliated local unions and over 350,000 union members from airline pilots to zoologists, including education, construction, entertainment, manufacturing, transportation, healthcare, retail, hospitality and the **local, state, and** public sectors. We champion every worker's right to unionize, to be treated fairly and without discrimination, to earn family-sustaining wages with secure retirement and affordable healthcare, and to work in safe conditions. Our efforts focus on:

- Ensuring every worker's right to form and join a union
- Investing public funds to create good jobs that improve infrastructure and schools
- Promoting and creating family-supporting jobs with strong benefits and protections
- Reindustrializing Maryland's economy while upholding labor standards
- Advancing fair tax policies and fiscal transparency
- Defending public education and the rights of public employees
- Combating wage theft by enforcing labor laws

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The State Federation provides support to local unions by **tracking all bills impacting workers and unions**; submitting oral and written testimony, scheduling meetings with key legislative leaders and committees, soliciting testimony from other unions and participating in coalitions such as Everybody Votes Maryland, Caring Across Maryland, Medical Debt, and Fair Funding.

Donna S. Edwards

Donna S. Edwards, President



Session Highlights

The Fight for More Staffing

AFSCME and Building Trades members stood shoulder to shoulder at AFSCME's press conference this session to demand higher staffing levels and fair pay that state employees deserve for their service. They uplifted that Maryland's public workforce continues to be stretched thin, facing chronic understaffing, rising overtime costs, and billions spent on private contractors. Their message was heard loud and clear: state employees are Maryland's backbone and when workers stand together, we win.

Advocacy for Safe Staffing in Hospitals

1199 SEIU members descended on Annapolis to demand the passage of HB 624/SB 411, the Safe Staffing Act of 2026, making clear that Maryland's hospitals cannot deliver safe, high-quality care without enforceable staffing standards that include the voices of those on the frontlines. These members showed up because they know the truth: safe staffing saves lives.



AFSCME President, Patrick Moran (top), and IBEW 24 Business Manager, Mike McHale (below)



AFT Legislative Reception

Maryland's American Federation of Teachers hosted a legislative reception that brought together members, affiliates, and allies to lay out their legislative agenda for the 2026 General Assembly session. Throughout the evening, AFT members strongly advocated for collective bargaining rights for nontenure track faculty, emphasizing the importance of these rights and having a real voice in campus decision-making. They also elevated the granting the right to strike for teachers and librarians, and pushed for safe staffing levels in hospitals. Affiliates stood together, highlighting several other impactful pieces of legislation affecting workers across the state.



1199 SEIU and AFT members at their Safe Staffing Lobby Day.



AFT Maryland President, Kenya Campbell (Right), BTU President, Diamonte Brown (Left), joined by Maryland State & DC President, Donna Edwards (Middle) at AFT MD Legislative Reception.

March 9th Rally

Nearly 400 union members came together on March 9 for our Union Night Rally, a powerful show of solidarity during this year's legislative session. Led by President Donna Edwards, the crowd sent a clear message as we asked elected officials, "Whose Side Are You On?" IATSE 19 set the stage, AFM provided rousing music and only Labor leaders and members spoke to our unions. While some legislators participated in support of our unions, no politician was given the mic. This is labor's night to underscore our collective power.

President Edwards and Secretary-Treasurer Sam Epps called to the stage leaders from IBEW, AFSCME, AFT, UA, ATU, Ironworkers, CWA, UNITEHERE, and UAW to rally the crowd in collective strength to pass labor's bills. The NIH UAW President asked us all to join their fight for continued recognition as a union which the administration is attempting to avoid.

The rally underscored how essential it is for working people to stand together—because when we show up in force, we win. United across the state, we advance pro-worker legislation and ensure that the voices of workers are heard throughout the legislature.



2026 Session Statistics

- Tracked Bills – 300+
- Testimony Submitted – 90+
- Crossfile Testimonies – 50
- Senate Bills – 1,008
- House Bills – 1,646
- Senate Resolutions – 5
- House Resolutions – 10
- Total – 2,654 bills, 15 resolutions

During the 2026 General Assembly, legislators introduced 2,654 bills and 15 resolutions. The Senate originated 1,008 bills and 5 resolutions, and the House originated 1,646 bills and 10 resolutions.

Of these, 887 bills were enacted, while 2 resolutions passed. The State Federation reviews every bill to assess its impact on workers, tracked over 300 bills, and submitted or supported testimony for more than 90 pieces of legislation and 50 crossfiles. Dozens of bills benefiting Maryland workers and unions were passed.

Labor passed 27 bills specifically impacting our unions, members' work, and workers' protections and rights. We also provided amended support testimony to the administration's bills to push labor protections.

The 448th session of the Maryland General Assembly convened on January 14, 2026, and adjourned on April 13, 2026, marking the fourth year of the 2023–2027 term for 47 Senators and 141 Delegates.



Labor's Summary of the 2026 Session & the Road Ahead



Maryland's labor movement passed a number of bills that protect and enhance workers' rights. While we had some notable wins, several pieces of legislation will return in the 2027 Legislative Session.

Budget Challenges and Advocacy in the Public Sector

Going into the 2026 legislative session, the State faced a dramatically different fiscal landscape than anticipated just months earlier. What had been projected in April 2025 as a manageable \$300 million shortfall, unexpectedly ballooned to a \$1.5 billion deficit, driven in part by negative federal actions that directly reduced revenues and funding streams. With tax and fee increases taken off the table as a solution, the pressure to find cuts intensified, raising the stakes for every sector that relies on state support.

Protecting the public workforce and preventing harmful reductions to critical services was a top focus. Union members from across the state responded, descending on Annapolis throughout the session to make their voices heard. They packed hearing rooms, met with legislators, and maintained a

constant presence in the Chambers. Their message was clear: balancing the budget on the backs of these workers would only deepen the state's fiscal challenges. Their sustained advocacy helped keep the public sector at the forefront of deliberations during yet another challenging budget year.

Expanding Collective Bargaining Rights

Everything we do is focused on our goal of lifting up the lives of working people. Collective bargaining rights allow for a fair, negotiated contract on the job where workers have a voice in their working conditions and terms.

This year, labor passed several collective bargaining bills, extending these rights to thousands of workers across the state; collective bargaining for nontenure track faculty and for graduate assistants in the University System of Maryland, and collective bargaining for Baltimore County Library supervisors.

Binding arbitration reform for state employees passed as well. However, the USM lobbied relentlessly to weaken collective bargaining or kill the bills with key groups removed from coverage. The labor movement remains committed to working throughout the interim to lobby to restore the



excluded employees and return next session with stronger, more comprehensive legislation.

Labor Standards and Workforce Protections

This legislative session marked a major step forward for labor standards and worker protections, reflecting the moment of uncertainty in this country and the strength of united labor. Several significant bills advanced that strengthen the rights and security of working people across Maryland.

The State Federation worked closely with the Senate President and the House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee on SB 831/HB 1480, Maryland's "Little NLRA," establishing a comprehensive statewide labor-relations framework. Written with the advice of the AFL-CIO legal counsel, it provides a backstop for private workers should federal protections ever weaken or collapse, ensuring that Maryland maintains a stable system for collective bargaining and labor rights. It also makes Maryland a leader in strengthening child labor protections as these are being eroded in several other states.

The State Federation led the passage of SB 417, the Maryland Worker Freedom Act. This law prohibits employers from disciplining workers who choose not to attend "captive audience meetings," where politics, religion, and unions are discussed. This law reinforces a basic principle: workers should not be compelled to listen to their employer's views on topics unrelated to job performance.

Together, these bills, along with several others passed this session including the Safe Staffing Act of 2026, various apprenticeship bills, tracking and accountability bills, and legislation impacting firefighters, transportation network companies and railroads, all represent a broader effort to protect workers on the job, strengthen their rights, and ensure that Maryland workplaces remain fair and safe environments for everyone.

Our unions also fought hard for HB 1532, the Utility RELIEF Act, to ensure that any state-supported utility relief uplifted standards, protected workers, and guaranteed that public dollars supported family-sustaining jobs. HB 1532 moves forward as a bill that

delivers for ratepayers and workers.

Unfortunately, critical pieces of legislation failed to advance. HB 188/SB 3, the Unemployment Modernization Act, would have updated how benefits are calculated and increased both the maximum and minimum weekly benefit amounts to better support workers during times of job loss. HB 299/SB 60 would have addressed the widespread issue of wage theft across the state by expanding the powers of the Commissioner of Labor and Industry to streamline processes, encourage collaboration with the Attorney General's Office, and clarify investigation timelines all while holding General Contractors and subcontractors accountable.

Defending Against Harmful Legislation



This session, the labor movement pushed back against several major proposals that could have harmed thousands of union members and disrupted the livelihoods of workers. Internet Gaming made its return in multiple forms—Online Bingo, Online Poker, and even an Internet Gaming Referendum that would have placed the issue on the ballot. Although these proposals were framed as new revenue streams, unions recognized the real risks; the expansion of online gaming undermines stable jobs in existing gaming and hospitality industries and shifts revenue away from workplaces that support strong labor standards. By coordinating testimony, research, and outreach, the State Federation, UNITEHERE, SIU, IUOE, UFCW, UAW, IATSE, AFT, and IBT, successfully stopped these bills from advancing past committee.

We defeated the Heat Stress bill (SB 804) introduced this year. The proposed bill demolished eight years of passing legislation, writing

regulations, and building a strong statewide policy that finally put workers at the center of heat-illness prevention. The State Federation, building trades unions, public employee unions, hospitality unions, transportation unions and advocates testified against this bill. If this bill had passed, it would have erased years of advocacy and undone Maryland's first comprehensive, science-based heat-stress protections.

A bill was introduced that would have allowed fully autonomous vehicles to operate on Maryland roads with little to no regulation. The State Federation, ATU, Teamsters, and AFSCME raised concerns about the potential displacement of professional drivers, and safety implications of allowing these vehicles without strong oversight. The State Federation brought together a coalition, uniting unions, to highlight the risks and push back effectively. Our coordinated effort ensured that the bill did not move forward.

Both Internet gaming proposals and autonomous vehicle legislation are expected to return in future sessions, and the State Federation is preparing to continue defending workers, their jobs, and the standards that protect them.

Looking Ahead

The 2026 legislative session proved once again that when Maryland's labor movement stands united, we can accomplish

meaningful change—even passing bills that advocates have fought for decades for. But, our work is far from over. In the months ahead, we will continue advocating for legislation that uplifts Maryland workers, their families, and our unions. Together, we are building a stronger, fairer future for all.



Legislative Review by Subject

Collective Bargaining

✓ Passed the General Assembly

HB 141 - Collective Bargaining - State Personnel - Graduate Assistants

Graduate assistants at UMD College Park, and UMD Baltimore County can now unionize. The NLRB has long recognized them as workers essential to Maryland's research competitiveness. Maryland had been one of just two Big Ten schools blocking these rights. The Labor movement plans to return next session to extend collective bargaining rights to graduate assistants at all USM campuses, Morgan State, and St. Mary's College.



SB 6 - Collective Bargaining - State Personnel - Nontenure Track Faculty

This bill allows nontenure-track faculty across the University System of Maryland the right to collectively bargain, a milestone advocates have pushed toward for more than two decades. The labor movement plans to return next session to ensure every faculty member at every USM campus gains the same right to organize.



HB 388/SB 253 - Baltimore County Public Library - Collective Bargaining - Supervisory Employees

The Baltimore County Public Library System is one of the biggest library systems in the state and its success relies on the people who run it every day. The work supervisors do is essential—guiding staff, maintaining functional branches, and implementing statewide expectations. This legislation establishes a dedicated bargaining unit for supervisory employees who were left out of the current law. This allows supervisors to have a voice on the job and does not disrupt existing structures.

HB 604/SB 28 - Arbitration Reform for State Employees Act of 2026

Binding arbitration recognizes that both parties in negotiations do not always agree and can reach an impasse with no resolution. This bill establishes binding arbitration for certain state worker collective bargaining, providing workers with a balanced approach and timely and fair decisions. The labor movement will be coming back next session to include the University System of Maryland into this structure.



SB 136 - Collective Bargaining - Alcohol, Tobacco, and Cannabis Commission - Police Officers

This legislation restores collective bargaining rights for police officers in the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Cannabis Commission regardless of when they were hired. This bill simply corrects an oversight in the current law that was passed in 2019.

✘ Failed to Pass the General Assembly

HB 1108 - Labor and Employment - Greenhouse Workers - Collective Bargaining and Heat Protection

HB 1108 would have given greenhouse workers the long-denied right to organize, form a union, and negotiate for the protections they deserve. It would have corrected decades of exclusion that began when agricultural workers were left out of the 1935 National Labor Relations Act where greenhouse workers were mistakenly swept in. By recognizing that greenhouse labor is year-round, physically demanding, historically receives low wages, and high heat exposure, this bill would have acknowledged the real conditions these workers face. Ultimately, this legislation would have ensured that greenhouse workers finally had a voice in their workplace.

HB 1492 - Collective Bargaining - Public Employees - Revocation of Certification and School and Library Employees' Right to Strike

Research has shown that strikes often lead to long-term improvements in staffing, learning conditions, and community well-being. HB 1492 would have restored the right to strike for public school and library employees who keep Maryland's communities functioning. This legislation would have ensured that these employees could advocate for unfair conditions and stronger public services.

HB 473 - Education - Collective Bargaining - Certificated Employees - Class Size

HB 473 would have made a simple correction to Maryland law by removing the prohibition on negotiating class size, restoring collective bargaining that directly affected teaching conditions, learning conditions, and public schools. By treating class size like other working conditions, this legislation would have ensured it was subject to good-faith negotiation between educators and school systems.

HB 831/ SB 922 - Collective Bargaining - Local Government Employees and Public Employee Relations Act

Moving toward a unified system of public sector

bargaining rights. The development of public sector collective bargaining rights in Maryland has been inconsistent, resulting in a patchwork of laws that create disparities in rights, responsibilities, and protections for public employees, exclusive representatives, and employers. This fragmented system is inefficient and unjust, forcing workers to fight for rights that should be guaranteed. The proposed legislation would have created a uniform and equitable framework for collective bargaining rights across local governments—ensuring that county and municipal employees have the same rights and protections as their counterparts in the private sector and in jurisdictions where collective bargaining is already recognized. This would be a significant step toward reinforcing Maryland's commitment to fairness and equity in the workplace.

Worker Rights & Protections

✔ Passed the General Assembly

SB 831 - Labor Law - Child Labor Penalties, Private Sector Employee Labor Relations, and State Employee Labor Standards

SB 831 takes a significant step forward at a moment of national uncertainty by creating a "Little NLRA" for the state. It establishes a statewide labor-relations framework designed to operate if federal protections weaken or collapse. By doing so, the bill preserves collective bargaining rights and maintains rules and processes for workers and employers.



HB 532/SB 445 - Employment Standards - Firefighters - Payment of Wages and Payroll Information

Firefighters routinely place their lives on the line to protect our communities. However, many of them face inequitable compensation practices, perpetuating wage disparities and unfair and deceptive treatment. This legislation directly

addresses this by enhancing fairness, transparency, and accountability to protect against wage miscalculations and relieve the burdens of navigating compensation issues that often fall on the firefighters themselves.

SB 417 - Labor and Employment - Mandatory Meetings on Religious or Political Matters - Employee Attendance and Participation (Maryland Worker Freedom Act)

Maryland law now prohibits employers from disciplining workers who decline to attend “captive audience” meetings where politics or religion is discussed. The measure builds on previous legislation affecting public employees and extends these safeguards to all workers in the state, ensuring that participation in political or religious discussions at work is voluntary. This law regulates coercive practices rather than speech itself giving workers the freedom to not listen.



HB 480/SB 740 - Transportation Network Companies - Deactivation of Operators

This legislation enhances transparency and fairness in transportation network companies by requiring them to adopt clear deactivation policies and accessible appeal processes. Operators will receive timely notice, justification, and a thorough investigation before any deactivation occurs. This legislation strengthens protections for operators and promotes a more equitable and transparent industry.

HB 242/SB 216 - Unemployment Insurance - Confidentiality of Information

When a worker loses their job, they face uncertainty and must learn to navigate new hardships. The last thing they need to worry about is their personal information to be exposed, misused, or shared without their consent. This bill updates Maryland’s unemployment confidentiality law so they match

federal requirements, ensuring that the state protects workers in moments of hardship instead of exposing them to additional risks.

SB 94 - Commercial Law - Earned Wage Access - Revisions

SB 94 protects workers by ensuring they receive their wages promptly and are not subjected to predatory earned wage access practices. It bans tipping by lenders and prohibits providers from even asking for a tip, closing off a major source of hidden fees. This bill strengthens consumer protections by requiring licensing, enforcing refund timelines, and bringing earned wage access providers under Maryland’s existing lending framework.

✘ Failed to Pass the General Assembly

HB 188/SB 3 - Unemployment Modernization Act of 2026

Especially at a time of great uncertainty at the



federal level,

unemployment insurance (UI) provides a critical safety net for workers to prevent them from total financial ruin if they lose their job and plays a crucial role in maintaining economic stability. If passed, this legislation would have expanded the maximum and minimum UI weekly benefit amounts and modernized our UI calculations to change with economic conditions. This would have taken a step in ensuring support is there for workers when they need it most.

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on the firefighters themselves.

HB 148 - Consumer Protection and Labor and Employment - Surveillance-Based Price and Wage Setting - Prohibition

Surveillance-based pricing undermines the foundational principle of a fixed-priced system where every consumer pays the same price for goods. It exploits an individual's personal data, erodes consumer trust, and creates a marketplace where customers are vulnerable to a companies' predatory practices. HB 148 would have restored fairness by prohibiting this form of opaque pricing manipulation and wage setting.

HB 317 - Recipients of Economic Development Assistance or State Contracts - Certification of Compliance with State Labor Laws

Maryland invests millions of public dollars each year to help businesses grow, innovate and create jobs. Those investments are meant to strengthen our economy, not support employers who violate wage laws, misclassify workers, or ignore final orders requiring them to pay what they owe. HB 317 would have ensured that public funds go to employers who play by the rules and treat their workers fairly by requiring an annual certification that would show that it was not the subject of a labor violation and not out of compliance with the law.

Worker Safety & Health

✓ Passed the General Assembly

HB 149 - Fire Prevention, Assistant Fire Marshals, Residential Rental High-Rise Property Fire Safety Equipment, and Fire Alarm System Technicians

HB 149 is a clear investment in public safety and the skilled workforce that protects Marylanders every day. This bill strengthens life-safety protections certification by mandating smoke detectors in interior corridors and, during substantial renovations, the installation of sprinkler systems, ensuring these life-critical systems are inspected,



tested, and maintained by properly qualified technicians.

Building & Construction Trades

✓ Passed the General Assembly

HB 864 - Public Works Contracts - Apprenticeship Requirements (Maryland Workforce Apprenticeship Utilization Act)

Apprenticeships are an effective way for individuals to gain hands-on experience and technical education, ensuring they develop the necessary expertise needed for their careers while providing employers with a capable workforce. This legislation establishes a minimum threshold on public works construction projects, requiring at least 20% of labor hours to be completed by registered apprentices. The passage of this legislation invests in our states' workforce development, while reinforcing the importance of apprenticeship opportunities and participation.

HB 1165/SB 673 - State Procurement - Apprenticeship Program Accountability and Completion

This legislation builds on the progress from the Procurement Reform Act passed in 2025 by ensuring that certified apprenticeship programs meet at least a 25% completion rate. This standard helps guarantee that public dollars support training programs that provide real mentorship, skill-building, and pathways to advancement. By promoting programs that see apprentices through completion, this legislation reinforces Maryland's pipeline of skilled workers and strengthens the quality and stability of the State's workforce.

❌ Failed to Pass the General Assembly HB 299/SB 60 - Fraud Prevention, Prevailing Wage, and Living Wage - Prohibitions, Penalties, and Enforcement

Workplace fraud is a widespread and growing issue across all sectors in Maryland. By committing workplace fraud, employers undermine fair labor practices and do not pay millions of dollars' worth of taxes. HB 299/SB 60 would have combated this by strengthening our standards by expanding the powers of the Commissioner of Labor and Industry to encourage collaboration with the Attorney General's Office, streamline investigations and ensure that violations are addressed in a timely and efficient manner.



Education

✔ Passed the General Assembly SB 720 - Education - Artificial Intelligence - Guidelines, Professional Development, and Collaborative (Artificial Intelligence Ready Schools Act)

SB 720 marks a step forward for Maryland by establishing consistent statewide guidance on how AI should be used in K-12 classrooms. With MSDE now required to publish clear expectations that keep students and teachers at the center, this legislation helps ensure AI supports learning



rather than complicating it. Through the creation of the Maryland AI Education Collaborative, SB 720 strengthens the state's commitment to helping schools integrate AI in ways that enhance instruction and reduce burdens on teachers.

HB 478 - Income Tax - Subtraction Modification for Classroom Supplies Purchased by Teachers - Alteration

Pre-K teachers are the first educators many children ever meet. Their classrooms are where students learn how to learn. These educators routinely spend their own money on the many materials that make early learning possible. HB 478 makes a simple correction to Maryland's tax code by extending the existing subtraction modification for unreimbursed classroom supply expenses to include Pre-K teachers, ensuring they receive the same tax relief already available to K-12 teachers.

❌ Failed to Pass the General Assembly HB 64/SB 170 - Task Force on Education Funding and Student Population Growth

This legislation would have established a Task Force on Education Funding and Student Population Growth. The task force would have been charged with analyzing the challenges caused by delays in student enrollment counts and their impact on school funding, as well as examining the relationship between growing student populations and the provision of that funding. To ensure that the voices of those who work directly with students are represented, labor was successful in adding an amendment to have a representative from the Baltimore Teachers' Union sit on the task force.

HB 1205/SB 764 - Education - Minimum Wage for Education Support Professionals

Education Support Professionals (ESPs) play an essential role in everyday operations of our schools and in students' lives both inside and outside the classroom. Personnel such as paraeducators, custodians, cafeteria workers, administrative staff, bus drivers, and security and technology staff keep our schools running smoothly and efficiently all while keeping our students safe and healthy. This legislation would have established a minimum wage of \$25 per hour for ESPs to ensure these individuals have the resources they need and the



compensation they deserve.

Healthcare

✓ Passed the General Assembly

HB 624/SB 411 - Hospitals - Clinical Staffing Committees and Plans - Establishment (Safe Staffing Act of 2026)

Patients and healthcare workers deserve safe staffing plans. This legislation lays a strong foundation by requiring hospitals to develop staffing plans that include direct care workers and address the unique and evolving needs of patients. It creates a structured framework to ensure that those on the front lines, who witness firsthand the consequences of inadequate staffing have a voice in these critical decisions.

✗ Failed to Pass the General Assembly

HB 1414/SB 663 - Nursing Homes - Direct Care Wages and Benefits and Cost Reports

This legislation would have built on the work started with SB 697 from 2025 by requiring the Maryland Department of Health to assess nursing home spending so the State could better understand how Medicaid and Medicare dollars were being used. It would have established an enforceable requirement that 75% of total nursing and residential care revenue be directed toward wages and benefits for direct care staff. It also would have addressed the connection between staffing and wages by ensuring that facility revenue was reinvested in the workers who keep these facilities

operating each day.

Energy

✓ Passed the General Assembly

HB 1532 Utility RELIEF (Reducing Energy Load Inflation for Everyday Families) Act

HB 1532 is a step forward in ensuring Maryland's expanding data-center industry delivers real benefits for workers and communities. The bill strengthens oversight and sets clear expectations for responsible data-center development, while requiring them to pay their fair share. Labor worked hard to secure strong labor standards in the final bill, including prevailing wage requirements, to ensure the jobs created by this growing sector, produce high-quality, family-sustaining jobs.

✗ Failed to Pass the General Assembly

HB 345/SB 341 - Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

This legislation would have grounded solar growth in responsible development standards to ensure the clean-energy transition delivered high-quality, local jobs. HB 345/SB 341 would have supported skilled labor by setting clear procurement requirements and creating a structured pathway for distributed and utility-scale projects, translating solar expansion into real work for the trades while aligning with the state's goals. Maryland must ensure that public investment in solar energy delivers good jobs, strong communities, and a

clean-energy economy that uplifts workers rather than undercutting them.

Transportation

✓ Passed the General Assembly

HB 1081 - Maryland Transit Administration Reform Act

HB 1081 builds on the foundation set by the General Assembly in 2023 after establishing the Baltimore Regional Transit Commission. This legislation guarantees worker representation on the Board of Directors for Baltimore Core Transit Service and on the Commuter Services Advisory Board, making the people who operate and maintain the system a core part of decision-making. This strengthens safety, transparency, workforce stability, and



system reliability while advancing a transit system that puts workers first.

✗ Failed to Pass the General Assembly

HB 386/ SB 281 - Metro Funding Modification Act of 2026

Metro's bus, rail, and paratransit services have long been essential to the region's mobility, connecting workers to jobs, students to schools, individuals to appointments, and businesses to customers. Despite this importance, WMATA has operated for decades without dedicated funding. This legislation would have addressed this structural shortfall by stabilizing WMATA's capital budget, protecting Maryland's investments, and helping the region avoid the safety failures and underinvestment that had handicapped the system. It also would have ensured that workers were protected during a major automation transition by requiring WMATA to negotiate workforce transition agreements so

technological change strengthened, rather than undermined, the people who keep Metro running.

Oversight & Others

✓ Passed the General Assembly

HB 472/SB 440 - Income Tax - Theatrical Production Tax Credit - Alterations and Sunset Extension

SB 440/HB 472 provides stability and predictability that the theatrical industry thrives on and needs to make long-term commitments. This stability keeps the sector a strong economic engine- strengthening small businesses, supporting family-sustaining careers, and boosting local and state economies. This legislation simply extends the Theatrical Production Tax Credit, a program modeled on the highly successful Film Activity Tax Credit and built with the same transparency, accountability, and clear economic benefits for Maryland workers and communities.

✗ Failed to Pass the General Assembly

HB 1173 - State Procurement - Contractors and Vendors - Restrictions on Use of State Funds and Resources

The Public Employee Relations Act passed in 2023 prohibited State, county, and municipal agencies from using public dollars to influence employees' decisions about union support, drawing a clear line that public funds could not be used to pressure workers about their rights. HB 1173 would have extended that same standard to contractors and vendors performing public functions. This legislation would have strengthened accountability in State contracting, protected workers' rights, and



reinforced that public funds must serve public purposes through fairness and transparency.

HB 1037/SB 605 - Public Service Commission - Broadband and Voice Over Internet Protocol Service - Study

SB 605/HB 1037 would have authorized the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) to oversee broadband and VoIP service quality, require outage reporting, evaluate emergency preparedness plans, and mandate corrective actions when providers failed to meet basic standards. This bill was in response to years of deregulation that had weakened public oversight and left consumers with unreliable service despite broadband being essential for work, education, healthcare, and public safety. This legislation would have brought long-needed accountability to the industry and ensured that residents, businesses, and first responders could rely on the communication systems they depend on every day.

HB 78/SB 457 - Property Taxes - Authority of Counties to Establish Subclasses and Set Separate Rates for Land and Improvements to Land

Our current property tax system incentivizes low-density development, which runs counter to the needs of communities around transit stations. This legislation aimed to correct that imbalance



by allowing counties and the City of Baltimore to implement a “split-roll” tax on properties within a one-mile radius of major rapid transit infrastructure, including WMATA, Metrorail, Baltimore Metro SubwayLink, and MARC. By focusing on land-value return (LVR), the policy would shift the tax burden from the buildings on a property to the land itself. This encourages denser development and discourages the underutilization of valuable land. Emphasizing LVR promotes the construction of multi-family housing, mixed-use developments, and more efficient uses of land—such as converting parking lots into housing or commercial space.

HB 77 - Consumer Protection - Sale and Resale of Event Tickets - Registration and Regulation

Maryland helped lead the national conversation when the General Assembly began examining ticket resale abuses in 2024. Since then, momentum has grown as states including Maine, California, New York, and Oklahoma considered similar measures in response to the harms caused by unchecked resale practices. HB 77 would have built on that progress by pairing price caps with strong registration requirements, transparency standards, and protections against opaque ticketing.

Budget Overview

The House of Delegates and the Senate alternate responsibility each year for who moves the budget bill first. In 2026, the Senate was responsible for moving the budget.

Maryland's budget conversations opened this session with deepening fiscal strain on the minds caused by major federal funding cuts and a stagnant economy that forced tax increases the previous year. After enacting a series of tax increases to close the \$1.5 billion shortfall, state leaders entered the 2026 General Assembly session not wanting to raise taxes again in an election year. However, the fiscal picture quickly worsened. What had been expected to be a manageable \$300 million deficit at the close of the 2025 General Assembly session, grew to \$1.5 billion by December, four times higher than April projections. This was largely due to revenue losses tied to negative federal actions.

Analysts from the Department of Legislative Services suggested using \$815 million from the Rainy Day Fund as a temporary solution, but emphasized that it would not address the state's future fiscal challenges. Their outlook underscored the severity of the challenge, with the deficit projected to grow to \$3.2 billion in FY28, \$3.5 billion in FY29, and \$4 billion in FY30.

The Governor introduced his proposed \$70.8 billion FY27 budget on January 21, an increase of about \$511.9 million compared to the fiscal 2026 spending plan, which included:

- \$900 million in targeted cuts and other cost-saving measures
- No new taxes or fees
- The elimination of a \$1.5 billion cash shortfall
- Maintaining 8% in the Rainy Day Fund
- Reducing government operating expenses by \$154 million between FY26 and FY27
- \$124 million to support law enforcement
- \$10.6 million investment for the Department of Juvenile Services

- \$30 million to support maintenance and operations for aging Department of Corrections and Public Safety facilities statewide
- \$306 million in funding for renewable and clean energy programs
- Maintaining \$414 million to support the Child Care Scholarship program
- \$50 million for the Baltimore Vacant Reinvestment Initiative
- \$65 million for Rental Housing Works
- \$8 million for the Partnership Rental Housing program
- \$20 million for Homeownership Programs
- \$73.7 million to fund 252 projects through six state revitalization programs
- \$100 million in targeted business tax cuts
- A 17% increase in education investment over the FY26 budget

The Senate Budget and Taxation Committee approved its budget on March 13, followed by approval by the whole Senate on March 19. The Senate made little changes to the Governor's proposed budget only adding on little cuts and ending up with a \$250 million in cash surplus. The Senate restored more than \$23 million initially cut by Governor Moore, but left in place more than \$126 million in cuts. The House Appropriations Committee reviewed the Senate budget and unveiled its response on March 23. The House approved the budget on March 30, with no major disagreements between the two chambers. The House maintained no tax or fee increases, kept \$2.2 billion in the state Rainy Day Fund, and added an extra \$30 million to the cash surplus that the Senate came out with.

On April 8, the Wednesday before Sine Die, Governor Moore signed the budget into law, raising it just under 1.2% from the previous year and leaving the state with a cash surplus to help address future fiscal complications without raising any taxes or fees for Marylanders. Actions taken by the General

Assembly in the budget bill and the Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act (BRFA) reduced \$803.1 million of general fund spending, leaving a general fund cash balance of \$201 million at the end of fiscal 2027 as reported by the Board of Revenue Estimates.

The Final Budget included:

- \$13.18 billion in total personnel funds, representing 17.7% of the State budget
- \$126 million in cuts from the Developmental Disabilities Administration
- Moving \$292 million from the Strategic Energy Investment Fund (SEIF) to the general fund
- Shifting \$39.3 million in retirement costs for teachers, librarians, and community college staff to local governments
- \$129.7 million for a 1.5% general salary increase for most state employees
- \$63.8 million for adjustments to salary step widths
- \$10 million for salary step increments for law enforcement
- \$2.5 million for targeted Annual Salary Review grade increases
- Investing \$306 million in funding for renewable and clear energy programs in the Maryland Energy Administration
- \$434 million to support the Child Care Scholarship program
- \$73.7 million to fund more than 250 state revitalization programs administered by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
- \$124 million in funding to support law enforcement through State Aid for Police Protection Program
- Investing \$10.6 million for the Department of Juvenile Services
- \$35 million to support maintenance and operations for aging Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services facilities
- \$480.5 million for school construction
- \$572 million to support Community schools

- \$100 million in targeted business tax cuts
- \$150 average energy rebate for households
- \$10.1 billion in k-12 education funding (record amount)
- \$4 million for the Maryland Growth Initiative
- \$1.5 million for the Maryland's Future Fund
- \$1 million for the Maryland Workforce Launch Pilot Program
- \$10 million to address repeat audit findings
- \$4 million for State fiscal leadership capacity

The final approved **Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act (BRFA)**, used by the General Assembly to amend existing laws to meet the needs of the budget, included:

- Eliminating the required appropriation in fiscal 2027 of general fund surplus from fiscal 2025, for one-year savings of \$449.8 million
- Limiting the growth for each community college under the Senator John A. Cade funding formula to 3% for fiscal 2027 through 2029, a fiscal 2027 savings of \$21 million
- Decoupling from the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) tax provisions resulting in general fund revenues totaling \$132.8 million with special fund revenues totaling \$30.7 million
- Transferring \$380 million from the Local Income Tax Reserve Account to the General Fund
- \$888.4 million in total transfers to the General Fund Reducing expenditures by a combined \$91.2 million primarily from General Funds

Sine Die



Committee Changes and Updates

Committee & Subcommittee Leadership Changes

House

- Melissa Wells – New Chair of the House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee
- Ken Kerr – New Vice Chair of the House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee
- Anne Kaiser – New Vice Chair of the House Appropriations Committee
- Kriselda Valderrama – New Chair of the House Economic Matters Committee
- Lorig Charkoudian – New Vice Chair of the House Economic Matters Committee
- Jheanelle Wilkins – New Chair of the House Ways and Means Committee
- Jessica Feldmark – New Vice Chair of the House Ways and Means Committee
- Michele Guyton – New Vice Chair of the House Environment and Transportation Committee
- Heather Bagnall – New Chair of the House Health Committee
- Bonnie Cullison – New Vice Chair of the House Health Committee
- J. Sandy Bartlett – New Chair of the House Judiciary Committee
- Debra Davis – New Vice Chair of the House Judiciary Committee

Senate

- Malcolm Augustine – New Member of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
- Ben Brooks – New Chair of the Senate Executive Nominations Committee
- Selly Hettleman – New Chair of the Budget and Taxation Public Safety, Transportation, and Environment Subcommittee
- Katie Fry Hester – New Chair of the Senate Rules Committee
- Karen Lewis Young – New Chair of the Budget and Taxation Pensions Subcommittee

- Kevin Harris – New member of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

House Subcommittee Changes:

Appropriations

- Malcolm P. Ruff – Chair – Appropriations Capital Budget
- Mark S. Chang – Vice Chair – Appropriations Capital Budget
- Stephanie Smith – Chair – Appropriations Education and Economic Development
- Sarah S. Wolek – Vice Chair – Appropriations Education and Economic Development
- Emily Shetty – Chair – Appropriations Health and Social Services
- Dana Jones – Vice Chair – Appropriations Health and Social Services
- Catherine Forbes – Chair – Appropriations Committee on Pensions
- Anne Kaiser – Vice Chair – Appropriations Oversight Committee on Pensions
- Gabriel Acevero – Chair – Appropriations Public Safety and Administration
- Julian Ivey – Vice Chair – Appropriations Public Safety and Administration
- Courtney Watson – Chair – Appropriations Transportation and Environment
- Mark Edelson – Vice Chair – Appropriations Transportation and Environment
- Aletheia McCaskill – Chair – Appropriations Racing and Sports Facilities
- Andrea Fletcher Harrison – Vice Chair – Appropriations Racing and Sports Facilities

Judiciary

- Jon Cardin – Chair – Judiciary Civil
- Kym Taylor – Chair – Judiciary Property and Casualty Insurance
- Scott Phillips – Chair – Judiciary Criminal

- Karen Simpson – Chair – Judiciary Family
- Jamila Woods – Chair – Judiciary Juvenile
- Elizabeth Embry – Chair – Judiciary Estates and Trusts

Health

- Pam Lanman Guzzone – Chair – Health Health Facilities
- Sandy Rosenberg – Chair – Health Health Occupations
- Lesley Lopez – Chair – Health Elder and Long-Term Care
- Bonnie Cullison – Chair – Health Insurance
- Steve Johnson – Chair – Health Pharmaceuticals
- Terri Hill – Chair – Health Public Health and Minority Health Disparities
- Jennifer White Holland – Chair – Health Maternal, Infant, and Child Health

Environment and Transportation

- Dana Stein – Chair – Environment and Transportation Environment
- Robbyn Lewis – Chair – Environment and Transportation Motor Vehicles
- Natalie Ziegler – Chair – Environment and Transportation Agriculture and Aquaculture
- Linda Foley – Chair – Environment and Transportation Non-Energy Utilities
- David Fraser-Hidalgo – Chair – Environment and Transportation Energy
- Regina Boyce – Chair – Natural Resources and Open Space

Economic Matters

- Lily Qi – Chair – Economic Matters Economic Development
- Pam Queen – Chair – Economic Matters – Banking, Consumer Protection and Commercial Law
- Mike Rogers – Chair – Economic Matters Business Regulation

- Andre Johnson – Chair – Economic Matters Unemployment Insurance
- Adrian Boafo – Chair – Workers' Compensation
- Marlon Amprey – Chair – Economic Matters Housing and Real Property
- Harry Bhandari – Chair – Land Use and Zoning

Ways and Means

- Caylin Young – Chair – Ways and Means Early Childhood and Special Ed
- Kent Roberson – Chair – Ways and Means Local Revenues
- Bernice Mireku-North – Chair – Ways and Means Child Care
- Edith Patterson – Chair – Ways and Means Gaming

Government Labor and Elections

- Sheree Sample-Hughes – Chair – GLE Alcoholic Beverages
- Kris Fair – Chair – GLE Election Law
- Sheila Ruth – Chair – GLE Labor
- Ken Kerr – Chair – GLE Government Operations and Ethics
- Mary Lehman – Chair – GLE Local Government/BiCounty Agencies and Administration
- Jared Solomon – Chair – GLE Oversight Committee on Personnel
- Charlotte Crutchfield – Chair – GLE Corrections

Resignations & Appointments

Resignations and appointments listed here include those made after the end of the 2026 legislative session.

House of Delegates Resignations

- Adrienne A. Jones (D) , District 10, Baltimore County – Resigned as Speaker of the House in December 2025 and is not seeking reelection.

- Vanessa Atterbeary (D), District 13, Howard County - Resigned on January 14, 2026, to focus on her campaign for Howard County Executive.
- Jazz Lewis (D), District 24, Prince George's County - Resigned January 5, 2026, to take a senior position with the University of Maryland.
- Tiffany Alston (D), District 24, Prince George's County - Running for State Senate
- Kevin Anderson (R), District 38A, Somerset, Worcester, and Wicomico Counties - Not seeking reelection
- Adrian Boafo (D), District 23, Prince George's County - Running for 5th District in Congress
- Chris Bouchat (R), District 5, Frederick and Carroll Counties - Not seeking reelection
- Mark Chang (D), District 32, Anne Arundel County - Running for State Senate
- Barrie Ciliberti (R), District 4, Frederick County - Not seeking reelection
- Brian Crosby (D), District 29B, St. Mary's County - Not seeking reelection
- Bonnie Cullison (D), District 19, Montgomery County - Not seeking reelection
- Anne Healey (D), District 22, Prince George's County - Not seeking reelection
- Jim Hinebaugh (R), District 1A, Garrett and Allegany Counties - Not seeking reelection
- Nick Kipke (R), District 31, Anne Arundel County - Running for State Senate
- Nino Mangione (R), District 42A, Baltimore County - Running for Baltimore County Council
- Susan McComas (R), District 34B, Harford County - Not seeking reelection
- Pam Queen (D), District 14, Montgomery County - Not seeking reelection
- Josh Stonko (R), District 42C, Carroll County - Not seeking reelection
- Jen Terrasa (D), District 13, Howard County - Running for Howard County Clerk of Circuit Court

- C.T. Wilson (D), District 28, Charles County - Running for State Senate

Senate Resignations

- Pam Beidle (D), District 32, Anne Arundel County - Not seeking reelection
- Joanne Benson (D), District 24, Prince George's County - Not seeking reelection
- Arthur Ellis (D), District 28, Charles County - Running for 5th District in Congress
- Bryan Simonaire (R), District 31, Anne Arundel County - Not seeking reelection
- Chris West (R), District 42, Baltimore and Carroll Counties - Not seeking reelection

2026 Session Bill Sponsor Statistics

House of Delegates - Most Frequent Sponsors of Labor Supported Bills

Name	Committee	# of Labor Supported Bills Sponsored
Joe Vogel	W&M	6
Vaughn Stewart	GLE	4
Lorig Charkoudian	ECM	3
Linda Foley	ENT	3
Jessica Feldmark	W&M	2
Kris Fair	GLE	2
Marc Korman	ENT	2
Ryan Pruski	ECM	2
Nicole Williams	JUD	2
Eric Ebersole	W&M	2
Jared Solomon	GLE	2

Senate - Most Frequent Sponsors of Labor Supported Bills

Name	Committee	# of Labor Supported Bills Sponsored
Ben Kramer	FIN	7
Cory McCray	B&T	4
Malcolm Augustine	B&T	3
Clarence Lam	FIN	2

Monday Labor Lobbyists Meeting Attendance

Adrienne Brill	CWA Local 108	Lisa Fazzini	CWA
Angela Pishko	AFT-MD	Liza Smith	MCDCC D14
Arthur Bonsu	AFSCME Local 2250	Lydia Majure	UAW
Bill Kelly	USW #12517	Marcus Chambers..	CWA 2108
Brian Wivel	ATU 689/1300	Mike Canales.....	UA 5
Carol Carrvalho.....	AFL-CIO	Mike McHale.....	IBEW 24
Carol Rosenblatt	Retirees	Mike McMillan..	ATU 1300
Chad Conley	USW 08	Miranda Lan.....	Metro Baltimore AFL-CIO
Cherrish Vick	AFSCME	Natalia Bacchus	BTU
Chris Anderson	UA 486	Pamela Richardson	AFSCME 112
Christian Gobel	AFSCME 3	Patrick Moran	AFSCME Council 3
Courtney Jenkins	Metro Baltimore AFL-CIO	Ray Baker.....	Building Trades
Cristina Duncan Evans	BTU	Rico Albacarys..	IBEW 24
David Hecker	AFT	Rion Dennis	Metro Washington AFL-CIO
David O'Ferrall	IATSE 487	Robin Ward	ATU 1300
David Pendleton.....	SMART-TD	Rodney Rice.....	IBEW Local 307
Debra Graves-Latson.....	AFSCME 112	Roger Blacklow.....	Retirees
Denise Gilmore.....	AFSCME Council 3	Roxy Mejia	IUPAT DC 51
Denise Riley.....	AFT-MD	Scott Garvin.....	BAC 1
Diamonte Brown.....	BTU	Sean McCallum.....	ATU 1300
Doreen Carter	NALC	Shannon Opfer	CWA 2108
Essence Herndon... ..	ACE-AFSCME 2250	Steve Glascho	ATU 1300
Francisco Hernandez	IUOE 77	Takiyah Dingle.....	BTU Local 340
Jack M	UA 602	Terry Cavanaugh	SEIU
Jason Ascher.....	MAPT	Thomas Doyle	Teamsters
Jeffrey Johnson.....	AFT-MD	Tom Clark	IBEW 26
Jessica Cook.....	MSEA	Tom Gifford	UA 602
Josh VanDyke.....	IUOE 77		
Julius Wright	Plumbers Local 5		
Kayla Mock	UFCW 400		
Keith Stokes	IUOE 77		
Kenya Campbell	AFT-MD		
Kerry Killeen.....	TWU 556		
Korey Hartwich	NNU		



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