



LEGISLATIVELY SPEAKING

2011



This year, the House of Delegates focused on addressing the state's structural deficit, ensuring the long-term viability of the retiree benefit system and funding education programs to ensure a strong future for the State's knowledge-based economy.

The Plan

- As a result of our work, the State's structural deficit – projected to be \$2 billion at the beginning of session – has been reduced by over 42% moving forward.
- Leaves the State with over \$730M in cash reserves, including the Rainy Day Fund. Maryland is one of only 4 states in the country that has not dipped into its Rainy Day Fund during the recession.

Restored Funding to Education

- Restored \$58.5M in K-12 education spending, to bring per pupil funding back to FY11 levels. We worked to ensure that the restoration of this funding was fair and equitable – benefitting every county in the State. The State has committed a total of \$5.8B to school systems across Maryland next year.
- Provided funding to limit a tuition increase at universities to 3% and establishes a special grant program to cap community college tuition increases at 3%, to increase access to higher education for all Maryland residents.
- **Prince George's County significantly benefited by the Alcohol Tax Bill (HB 1213) which increased public school construction funds by \$9 million dollars.**

Supported Transportation

- Provided an additional \$13M to Maryland counties and municipalities for road maintenance funding
- Raises modest fees on certificate of title on new vehicle purchases and vanity tags to replace \$50M to the Transportation Trust Fund. This action was taken instead of a gas tax increase (supported by the Chamber and business organizations), given the high price of gas right now.

- Required any new transfer from the Transportation Trust Fund be repaid within 5 years, to protect the long-term sustainability of the State's transportation system.

Maintained Commitment to State Employees

- No furloughs for the first time in three years.
- Provided a one-time bonus of \$750. This rewarded State employees who have lost an average of \$3,100 in pay over the last three years.
- Ensured long-term sustainability of the State's pension system.

Invested in Economic Development to Jump Start the Economy

- Preserved funding for business loan and loan guaranty programs.
- Funded the Biotech Tax Credit, stem cell research programs.

Capital Budget

The Capital Budget represents hope for the State's future.

The FY12 capital budget requested a comprehensive evaluation of the State's entire debt program.

The capital budget next year funds:

- \$250M in school construction funding across the State
- \$198M in higher education facilities, including \$60M at our community colleges
- \$267M for environmental projects, including nutrient removal technologies at the State's 67 largest wastewater treatment plants
- \$39M for hospitals and health facilities across the State
- Over \$20M to continue the purchase of a new Medevac helicopter fleet

Passage requires that both chambers agree to exactly the same language or the differences must be resolved.

Delegate Carolyn J. B. Howard