

J.B. JENNINGS
Legislative District 7
Baltimore and Harford Counties

Budget and Taxation Committee

Subcommittees

Capital Budget

Health and Human Services

Legislative Policy Committee



The Senate of Maryland
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

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James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 323
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
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800-492-7122 Ext. 3706
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☐ *District Office*
141 N. Main Street, Suite K
Bel Air, Maryland 21014

July 30, 2025

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Rebecca Powell
rpowell@senate.state.md.us
(410) 841-3706

Re: Senator J.B. Jennings advocates for Maryland taxpayers - and wins; State rescinds hiring program funds

Harford and Baltimore County, MD - On Tuesday, July 29, 2025, Secretary Helene Grady of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) rescinded the budget transfer meant to expedite the hiring of laid-off federal employees. Senator Jennings had voiced his opposition to this hypocritical funding decision and is pleased to have received a communication directly from the Secretary regarding her decision to rescind Budget Amendment 077-25, which would have transferred \$30,000 from the Dedicated Purpose Account (DPA) to support Governor Wes Moore's expedited hiring program for former federal employees:

"I appreciate DBM's decision to withdraw this amendment. At a time when the State is offering \$20,000 buyouts to long-serving employees and implementing a hiring freeze due to our budget crisis, it is unconscionable to continue siphoning public dollars into a program that has shown minimal results. Since February, only 17 of 251 hires came through the expedited hiring initiative. Nearly \$1.97 million of the original \$2 million appropriation remains unused," stated Senator Jennings.

The Senator sits on the Budget and Taxation Committee and led the discussion in suggesting that the Governor consider a hiring freeze to alleviate the FY26 budget deficit. This transfer announced after the session ended and the budget was finalized drew the Senator's particular concern given that agencies have been told not to fill vacancies. Ironically, DBM was preparing to bring on two part-time contractors with these funds. The contradiction was too stark to ignore.

On July 17, Senator Jennings formally raised these concerns in a letter to Secretary Helene Grady of DBM. The Senator requested clarification on how this initiative aligned with state cost-saving measures, what evaluation metrics were in place, and whether the funds would be better allocated toward mitigating the deficit.

On July 29, DBM formally notified the Legislative Policy Committee that it was rescinding Budget Amendment 077-25. In their letter, DBM acknowledged the hiring freeze and confirmed that further waves of the hiring initiative are now on hold.

“Maryland’s working families deserve better than mixed messages and misplaced spending,” Senator Jennings added. “This rescission is a small step in the right direction toward restoring fiscal discipline and accountability.”

The following pages include the letters exchanged between DLS and Senator J.B. Jennings:

Page 3/12: Initial Email

Page 4/12 & 5/12: Senator Jennings’ two-page letter

Page 6/10-10/12: Email received on July 29, 2025

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DEPARTMENT OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES
OFFICE OF POLICY ANALYSIS
MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Victoria L. Gruber
Executive Director

Ryan Bishop
Director

July 17, 2025

The Honorable Helene T. Grady
Secretary, Department of Budget and Management
45 Calvert Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Secretary Grady:

We are writing on behalf of the Legislative Policy Committee (LPC) to inform you that the committee has completed its review of the budget amendment submitted by the Department of Budget and Management to LPC to transfer \$903,211 from the Catastrophic Event Account to the Maryland Department of Labor to pay for vendor loan distribution, contracts, and temporary staff to administer the Federal Government Employee Assistance Loan Fund under Chapter 97 of 2025.

The proposed use of funds is consistent with the purpose for which these funds were appropriated. Having received no objections from any member of the committee, it is appropriate to conclude that you may proceed with the budget amendment.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to email us at ryane.necessary@mga.maryland.gov and dana.tagalicod@mga.maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

Ryane M. Necessary
Committee Staff

Dana K. Tagalicod
Committee Staff

RMN:DKT/mpd

cc: Members of the Legislative Policy Committee
Sally Robb
Matthew Jackson
Victoria Gruber
Ryan Bishop
Jacob Cash

J.B. JENNINGS
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141 N. Main Street, Suite K
Bel Air, Maryland 21014

July 17, 2025

Sent via electronic mail

Secretary Helene T. Grady
Maryland Department of Budget and Management
45 Calvert Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Secretary Grady,

I am writing to express concern regarding Budget Amendment 077-25, which proposes the transfer of \$30,000 from the Dedicated Purpose Account (DPA) to support expedited hiring efforts for former federal employees under the Governor's Federal Employees Expedited Hiring Program.

While I recognize the value of attracting skilled personnel to state service, this transfer raises questions, particularly when viewed alongside other ongoing policies. The State is currently offering up to \$20,000 in early retirement incentives to encourage long-time state employees to leave the workforce, presumably to reduce costs and streamline operations. Simultaneously, we are actively transferring funds to bring in additional former federal employees.

Further complicating the matter is the fact that the State is reportedly operating under a hiring freeze. In this context, it is difficult to reconcile the decision to continue funding and prioritizing a hiring initiative for former federal employees, particularly when only 17 out of 251 hires since February 2025 have come through this expedited program, and nearly \$1.97 million of the original \$2 million appropriation remains unspent.

In light of these contradictions, I respectfully request clarification on the following points:

1. How does the federal employees expedited hiring initiative align with the State's stated cost-saving measures, including early retirements and the reported hiring freeze?
2. What criteria are used to justify the hiring of former federal employees, especially in part-time or contractual roles, when state agencies are under the governor's orders to not fill these vacancies internally?
3. What evaluation metrics is DBM using to determine whether this program is achieving its intended outcomes?
4. Is there any review underway to assess whether this transfer is necessary, or whether funds should be reallocated to address the state's current multi-billion-dollar deficit?

Secretary Helene T. Grady
July 17, 2025
Page 2

These are important questions as we work to ensure transparency, fiscal responsibility, and effective personnel management across the State government. I appreciate your time and attention to this matter and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

J.B. Sen. 
Senator J.B. Jennings

cc: Victoria Gruber, Executive Director, Legislative Services

WES MOORE
Governor

ARUNA MILLER
Lieutenant Governor



HELENE GRADY
Secretary

MARC L. NICOLE
Deputy Secretary

July 29, 2025

The Honorable Bill Ferguson
President of the Senate
H-107 State House
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

The Honorable Adrienne A. Jones
Speaker of the House
H-101 State House
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

The Honorable Guy Guzzone
Chairman
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West Miller Senate Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

The Honorable Benjamin S. Barnes
Chair
House Committee on Appropriations
121 House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

Dear Colleagues:

In a letter dated June 17, 2025, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) submitted the attached budget amendment (077-25) to the Legislative Policy Committee, the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee, and the House Appropriations Committee, pursuant to Section 7-310(d) of the State Finance and Procurement Article. This budget amendment would have transferred \$30,000 from the Dedicated Purpose Account to the DBM Office of Personnel Services and Benefits to support the program, including two contractual employees to assist in the implementation and management of the program. We appreciate the Department of Legislative Services review of the amendment. However, please accept this letter as notice of DBM's intention to rescind the budget amendment.

To mitigate the impact to Maryland and Marylanders from federal employees losing employment and to help attract critical skills needed in State government, Governor Moore issued a Directive to DBM to establish the Expedited Hiring Program. Following that Directive, SB1040 established the Expedited Hiring Program in the DBM for the purpose of hiring eligible applicants for vacant skilled and professional service positions in the State Personnel Management System (SPMS). The bill, emergency legislation, required DBM to identify job titles and positions equivalent to federal positions for the purpose of filling critical and hard-to-fill roles. DBM was also required to dedicate resources towards the recruitment of former federal workers, including marketing and recruitment activities for hiring into vacant positions. Prior to the hiring freeze announced in late June, DBM had undertaken the first wave of the Displaced Federal Workers Hiring Initiative through which more than 7,000 applications were reviewed. Since the hiring freeze has been announced, DBM is pulling back the budget request and is on hold with additional waves of the expedited hiring program as we assess ways to target these efforts to those critical state jobs that remain open for recruitment.

45 Calvert Street • Annapolis, MD 21401-1907

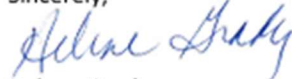
Tel: 410-260-7041 • Fax: 410-974-2585 • Toll Free: 1-800-705-3493 • TTY Users: Call via Maryland Relay

<http://dbm.maryland.gov>

Therefore, DBM requests the rescission of the budget amendment. There is sufficient appropriation within DBM's current resources for the costs incurred.

If you need any additional information, please feel free to contact my deputy, Marc Nicole, at (410) 260-7288.

Sincerely,



Helene Grady
Secretary

cc: Ms. Sally Robb, Chief of Staff, Senate President
Mr. Matthew Jackson, Chief of Staff, House Speaker
Ms. Victoria L. Gruber, Executive Director, DLS
Mr. Marc Nicole, Deputy Secretary, Department of Budget and Management



WES MOORE
Governor

ARUNA MILLER
Lieutenant Governor

HELENE GRADY
Secretary

MARC L. NICOLE
Deputy Secretary

June 17, 2025

The Honorable Bill Ferguson
President of the Senate
H-107 State House
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

The Honorable Adrienne A. Jones
Speaker of the House
H-101 State House
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

The Honorable Guy Guzzone
Chair
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West Miller Senate Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

The Honorable Benjamin S. Barnes
Chair
House Committee on Appropriations
121 House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

Dear Colleagues:

Pursuant to Section 7-310(d) of the State Finance and Procurement Article, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) submits the attached budget amendment to the Legislative Policy Committee, the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee, and the House Appropriations Committee. The amendment transfers \$30,000 from the Dedicated Purpose Account (DPA) to the Department of Budget and Management.

This budget amendment will transfer \$30,000 from the Dedicated Purpose Account to DBM Office of Personnel Services and Benefits. This funding will support the expedited recruitment and hiring of former federal employees by allowing DBM to hire two part-time contractual employees to support the completion of minimum qualifications and candidate tracking moving forward. Supplemental Budget #1 of the FY 2026 budget bill (HB 350) appropriated \$2,000,000 in the Dedicated Purpose Account in FY 2025 to be used in support of the Governor's federal workers hiring initiative. The remaining funding will be transferred to DBM as needed.

I would like to thank you in advance for your review. If you need any additional information, please feel free to contact my deputy, Marc Nicole, at (410) 260-7288.

Sincerely,


Helene Grady
Secretary

45 Calvert Street • Annapolis, MD 21401-1907
Tel: 410-260-7041 • Fax: 410-974-2585 • Toll Free: 1-800-705-3493 • TTY Users: Call via Maryland Relay
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cc: Ms. Sally Robb, Chief of Staff, Senate President
Mr. Matthew Jackson, Chief of Staff, House Speaker
Ms. Victoria L. Gruber, Executive Director, DLS
Mr. Marc Nicole, Deputy Secretary, Department of Budget and Management



WES MOORE
Governor

ARUNA MILLER
Lieutenant Governor

HELENE GRADY
Secretary

MARC L. NICOLE
Deputy Secretary

June 13, 2025

MEMORANDUM

TO: Governor Wes Moore

THRU: Secretary Helene Grady

THRU: Nathan Bowen, Executive Director

FROM: Kelsey Goering, Assistant Director

SUBJECT: Recommend Approval for Budget Amendment No. 077-25 – Maryland Department of Budget and Management

	Increase	Decrease	Realign
General Funds			
Special Funds	\$30,000		
Federal Funds			
TOTAL FUNDS	\$30,000		

Purpose: This budget amendment will transfer \$30,000 from the Dedicated Purpose Account to the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) Office of Personnel Services and Benefits. This funding will support the expedited recruitment and hiring of former federal employees by allowing DBM to hire two part-time contractual employees to support the completion of minimum qualifications and candidate tracking moving forward. Supplemental Budget #1 of the FY 2026 budget bill (HB 350) appropriated \$2,000,000 in the Dedicated Purpose Account in FY 2025 to be used in support of the Governor's federal workers hiring initiative. Remaining funding will be transferred to DBM as needed.

Appropriation Amendment No.

077-25

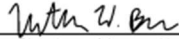
Agency Identification No. DBM 25-014

SCHEDULE OF AMENDED APPROPRIATION - FISCAL YEAR 2025

To The Honorable Wes Moore
Governor of the State of Maryland

Date: 13-Jun-25

F10 Department of Budget and Management hereby makes application for the Amendment of the Appropriation as noted below for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2025, for the reasons as attached hereto:



Signature of Agency Head

Executive Director, Office of Budget Analysis, DBM
Title

Fund Type	Agency Code	Agency Name	Unit Code	Unit Name	Program Code	Program Name	From	To	Amendment Amount
03	F10	Department of Budget and Management	A02	Office of Personnel Services and Benefits	01	Executive Direction	-	30,000	30,000
02	Y01	State Reserve Fund	A02	Dedicated Purpose Account	01	Dedicated Purpose Account	30,000	0	(30,000)
Total:							30,000	30,000	0

Recommended for approval of the Governor

Secretary, Department of Budget and Management

Date Approved: _____

Governor: _____

EXHIBIT B - AMENDED APPROPRIATION SUMMARY

AGENCY	Department of Budget and Management
CONTACT PERSON	Kelsey Goering
TITLE	Assistant Director, Office of Budget Analysis
ADDRESS	45 Calvert St, Annapolis, MD 21401
TELEPHONE	(410) 260-7481

Purpose and Urgency of Funds

This amendment is required and will transfer \$30,000 from the Dedicated Purpose Account to the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) Office of Personnel Services and Benefits. This funding will support the expedited recruitment and hiring of former federal employees by allowing DBM to hire two part-time contractual employees to support the completion of minimum qualifications and candidate tracking moving forward. Supplemental Budget #1 of the FY 2026 budget bill (HB 350) appropriated \$2,000,000 in the Dedicated Purpose Account in FY 2025 to be used in support of the Governor's federal workers hiring initiative. Remaining funding will be transferred to DBM as needed.

Proposed Source of Funds

AVAILABILITY: Funds are available for this amendment because appropriation is available in the Dedicated Purpose Account.

Fund Source: SWF307: Dedicated Purpose Account

If the amendment involves special funds, please provide balance information below:

	FY 2024 Actuals	FY 2025 Appropriation	Notes
Opening Fund Balance	\$0	\$2,000,000	
Revenues	\$0	\$0	
Existing Appropriation	\$0	\$0	
This Amendment	\$0	\$30,000	
Closing Fund Balance	\$0	\$1,970,000	