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| [Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland](http://salsa4.salsalabs.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=WApq8XPH75X3EvRaL58Zb6UCTf5%2BL%2FWi) |

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| Report of the 2018 Maryland General Assembly Session  At the close of the 2017 session of the Maryland General Assembly, we can report that all of our priority issues have been acted upon by the Legislature, and those that passed were sent to the Governor for Executive action. Most of these actions have been positive and reflect well on our elected officials.  *Climate Change*  Clean Energy Jobs Act of 2018 – The House Bill received an unfavorable report in the Economic Matters Committee and was withdrawn by the sponsor. It’s companion bill had a hearing in the Senate Finance Committee but was never brought up for a vote.  U.S. Climate Alliance – Both houses passed identical versions of the same bill that requires the Governor to include Maryland as a member of the U.S. Climate Alliance by July 1, 2018, and stipulates that withdrawal from the alliance is conditional on statutory approval from the General Assembly.  Offshore Wind Energy – In keeping with our opposition, the General Assembly refused to pass a measure would have required Maryland’s already-approved offshore wind farms to be moved further offshore, thereby making them infeasible.  *Economic Justice*  Healthy Working Families Act – Early in the session, the General Assembly overrode the Governor’s veto of House Bill 1, the 2017 legislation that assured that 750,000 hard-working employees in Maryland will have the right to earn sick leave to care for themselves or family members.  Minimum Wage (“Fight for Fifteen”) – Maryland’s effort to raise the minimum wage to $15 an hour was heard in the House and Senate committees but were never brought to a vote.  *Gun Violence*  Rapid Fire Trigger Activators – Both Houses passed identical versions of a bill to ban the sale or possession any device, part, or combination of devices or parts that is designed and functions to accelerate the rate of fire of a firearm beyond the standard rate of fire for firearms that are not so equipped. The governor has signed the Senate Bill.  Handgun Permit Review Board – Appeals – Both Houses passed identical versions of a bill to abolish the Handgun Permit Review Board which had been used to overrule the decisions of the State Police denying handgun carry permits. In its place, a person whose permit is denied may request to appeal the decision to the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) instead of the board. The Governor has signed the House Bill.  *Immigration*  Maryland Supporting All Families Everywhere “SAFE” Act – This measure would have clarified that the Federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents would do their job without the assistance of our local police, and the local police would not be co-opted into serving as ICE’s agents. The bill was heard in the House Judiciary Committee but was never brought to a vote.  DREAM Act – Another measure would have made it easier for an individual to be exempt from paying the out-of-state tuition rate under the Maryland Dream Act. It passed the House but failed in the Senate.  *Healthcare*  Saving the Affordable Care Act – UULM-MD supported and testified on two bills entitled the “Protect Maryland Health Care Act,” to replace the expiring federal mandate with a state mandate.  Residents without insurance could use the penalty fees to purchase health insurance or it could be used to help others not insured to obtain coverage. These bills did not get out of committee, but plans are being made to introduce them next year.  The General Assembly instead came to agreement on other measures to stabilize the individual insurance market for one year only, imposing a premium tax on insurers in place of the repealed federal provider fee and using that money to stabilize premiums. The state’s Health Insurance Coverage Protection Commission will study and make recommendations for individual and group health insurance market stability, including a possible state mandate like the one we supported. This measure was signed by the Governor.  Drug Prices – UULM-MD supported and submitted testimony on two bills entitled “Drug Cost Review Commission” to determine how to make prescription drugs more affordable and report to the General Assembly with recommendations on how entities within the prescription drug supply chain can improve access to affordable prescription drugs by State residents.  It passed the House and the Senate Finance Committee but did not get voted upon by the Senate before they adjourned.  Meanwhile, a bill that UULM-MD supported as part of the Maryland Health Care for All Coalition passed banning a pattern among some Pharmaceutical Benefit Mangers that prohibited pharmacists from telling consumers of cheaper ways to purchase their medications will not be allowed. The measure essentially lifted this “gag rule” that had been imposed on pharmacies.  *Restorative Justice*  “Ban the Box” – Early in the session, both Houses overrode the Governor’s veto of 2017 legislation that prohibited state colleges and universities from requiring applicants from checking a box indicating that they have no criminal history. This information may be considered in admission decisions later, but it does not prevent them from initial consideration.  Prison Education – UULM-MD’s primary initiative in this area was a measure to award a one-time diminution credit to reduce the term of confinement of an inmate if the inmate successfully obtained an educational certificate, diploma, or degree. Both bills received an unfavorable report from the House Judiciary and Senate Judicial Proceedings Committees.  However, both Houses passed a related bill to require the Division of Correction (DOC) to conduct, for each inmate, as soon as feasible after the individual is sentenced. DOC must include the educational, vocational, and job history of the inmate and the results of the interview in the case record for the inmate. In the final days, the Senate version of the bill was also amended to include the sentence diminution credits from the other bill, plus some other provisions originally in the Governor's "tough on crime" bills. In this form, the bill passed both houses and was signed by the Governor.  *Summary*  This year was the most ambitious session for UULM-MD yet, with actions taken on significantly more bills than ever before. Our successes were only possible due to the increase in activism by our members. We thank the many UUs statewide who responded to our alerts and advocated for these bills.  **Job Posting for New UULM-MD Coordinator**  UULM-MD Coordinator Julie Anne Schafer is leaving us for other pursuits, so the UULM-MD Board has begun a search for a new Coordinator.  Bring your administrative skills to support the effectiveness of the Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland, an organization of individuals and congregations acting on liberal religious values to influence state legislation, initiatives, and policy.  While the duties of the Coordinator are generally administrative/clerical in nature, the position is at the center of UULM-MD activities and involves continuous, regular, timely and effective communication among Board members, Task Force leaders, congregations and members. In this regard, the Coordinator serves as the "nerve center" of UULM-MD and is essential to assuring that everyone is kept informed and completes the important tasks that make our advocacy effective.  This is a part-time independent contract position, primarily working from home.  The workload will vary with the legislative calendar.  Some work in Annapolis is expected and living close makes this easier, but is not a requirement.  **Qualifications**   * College degree or equivalent education and experience. * Excellent interpersonal, communication and social media skills * Proficiency with web conferencing, updating and using a database (Salsa), and updating a website. (Coding not required.) * Familiarity with basic financial software and/oror bookkeeping tasks * Ability to manage your own workload within a flexible schedule.   **Application**  Inquiries and resumes should be sent to [info@uulmmd.org](mailto:info@uulmmd.org) by June 29, 2018.  **Faith-Based Advocacy and Elections**  Members of UULM-MD have an opportunity to influence the coming elections. While churches and other faith-based organization like UULM-MD cannot themselves take positions for or against a particular candidate or party, the campaign season offers opportunities for individuals to get involved fully in political campaigns as long as they do not appear to be speaking on behalf of the congregation or faith-based organization.  Furthermore, faith groups are allowed to ask candidates about their positions on issues of interest to our members, thereby raising their consciousness about important measures we support.  We urge all UUs to attend public events such as candidate forums and ask questions when allowed to do so. Promote our shared values and the measures that support them!  ------------------------------  For congregations and other faith-based nonprofit groups, "There is a total limitation on partisan activity, which the IRS calls political campaign intervention. Congregations and their representatives can do nothing that advocates for or against candidates for public office or political parties. This includes fundraising on behalf of candidates and donating meeting space, among other things. Example: supporting a particular candidate or party because of their stance on carbon emissions. Election-related activities such as candidate questionnaires and forums may be acceptable if certain guidelines are followed.  "Please Note: The restrictions on lobbying and political campaign intervention . . . apply only to a congregation as a legal entity, or to a person or group speaking in the name of the congregation. A minister or congregation member may freely engage in these activities as an individual. However, if the person(s) are identified by or likely to be associated with the congregation, it may be helpful to clearly state that they are speaking as individuals."  *Source: The Real Rules - Congregations and the IRS Guidelines on Advocacy, Lobbying, and Elections, Unitarian Universalist Association Multicultural Growth and Witness,*[*socialjustice@uua.org*](mailto:socialjustice@uua.org)*, Updated October 2016.*  As you may know, the [Poor People’s Campaign: A National Call for a Moral Revival](http://salsa4.salsalabs.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=6yWGj1Ak55CLzD7KNkOLCRbE%2BHfh%2FZA%2B) 40 Days of Action launched on Monday, May 14th.  This is a nationwide Nonviolent Moral Fusion sustained direct action movement. We need you to help Maryland sustain over the 40 days!  Join us for all the Moral Monday rallies at Lawyer's Mall, 100 State Circle, in Annapolis!  Tues, June 29, 2pm - THE WAR ECONOMY: Militarism and the Proliferation of Gun Violence  Mon, June 4, 2pm - THE RIGHT TO HEALTH AND A HEALTHY PLANET: Ecological Devastation and Health Care  Mon, June 11, 5:30pm - EVERYBODY'S GOT THE RIGHT TO LIVE: Education, Living Wage Jobs, Income, Housing  Mon, June 18, 2pm - A NEW AND UNSETTLING FORCE: Confronting the Distorted Moral Narrative  You can learn more by joining the [UUs & the Poor Peoples Campaign](http://salsa4.salsalabs.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=LwCAenJYb%2BPTV8ESOgnuPhbE%2BHfh%2FZA%2B) Facebook Group. |