



MARYLAND

HOUSE OF DELEGATES

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First Month of Session

The first month of session has come to a close and it's on to February!

An Ad Hoc Start

The Assembly is still splitting time between district and Annapolis as we balance the safety concerns of the new variant and the important work that must take place this session. Most business is still taking place virtually and - so far - there have been no major Covid incidents. With any luck, the virus will begin to fade with no new variants and we will be back in-person in Annapolis this month.

Redistricting & New Maps

The Assembly approved new legislative district maps last week. These maps attempt to balance keeping people in the districts/communities with which they are familiar while also making changes to ensure that minorities are better represented in the legislature. The most significant change



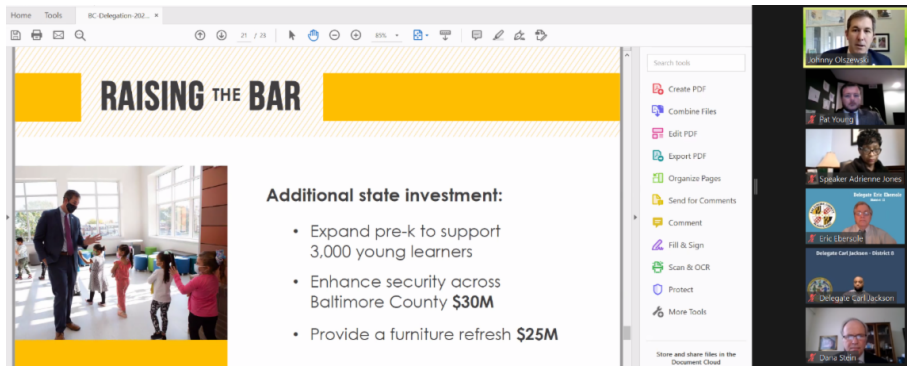
is that Baltimore City will lose two delegates in the house due to a 5.7% population drop in the past decade.

This process is always contentious and the Governor created his own maps with no input from the legislature. However, legislative maps do not require gubernatorial approval to become effective according to the MD state constitution.

There will likely be a court challenge - although a judge has set a February 10th deadline for the submission of any challenge. We can now move forward with the important business of session.

Business & News

Despite coronavirus, we have been plowing forward with normal business: drafting, submitting, and hearing legislation in committee for the rest of the Assembly to consider this session.



On Friday, County Executive Johnny Olszewski presented to the Baltimore County Delegation on everything from school construction to public safety in Baltimore County.

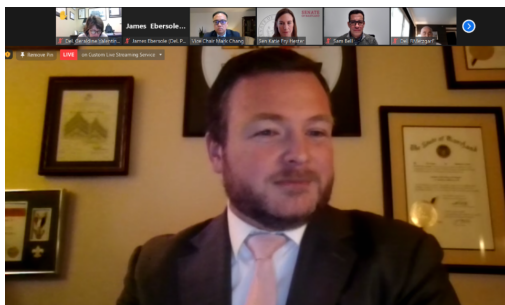
Incredible progress has been made in revitalizing the County and the County Executive made it clear that his administration is ready to get more done in partnership with the Delegation's efforts this session.

Pat's Legislative News

Maryland's Cybersecurity Infrastructure

As Chair of the Joint Committee on IT, Biotechnology, and Cybersecurity, Pat briefed the Appropriations Committee on absolutely essential needs of our state and local municipalities to have updated cybersecurity infrastructure.

The need for protection from the epidemic of cyber attacks is clearer than ever before.



The state is making strides in this year's budget to make up for the gaps in our security - but just like any defenses - the enemy is always innovating and we must do the same.

Restoration of Honor for 'DADT' LGBTQ Veterans

The 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell Policy' was always a problem and under that policy, many military members were discharged in a manner that was officially less than 'honorable'. That designation of anything less than 'honorable' makes receiving the promised benefits of their service difficult or impossible.

This is a bill creates a straight forward appeal process to the Secretary of the VA for those who were stripped of their honor through DADT to have their discharge status changed and thereby receive the benefits they rightly deserve.

Baltimore County Master Plan 2030 Community Input Opportunities

Master Plan 2030 development is underway.

Through the summer and fall of 2021, the Department of Planning conducted a series of Community Engagement Meetings that were held in different communities throughout the County. The input that was gathered will guide the vision for the local community and the County in the next 10 years.

At the heart of this process is the idea that local government should invest more – and more thoughtfully, in its people and infrastructure. The Baltimore County administration is holding **public meetings in January and February 2022** to ask for community input on these goals and assistance in suggesting actions to achieve them.

Here are the remaining sessions:

Interwoven Equity

Monday, January 31st 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Ensure fairness and equity in providing for the housing, services, health, safety, and livelihood needs of all citizens and groups.

This meeting will be held virtually via Webex.

[Join the meeting online](#)

Join the meeting by phone. Call 1-415-655-0001; access code 2312 633 7581.

If you have questions about this meeting, please contact April Smith asmith3@baltimorecountymd.gov

Harmony with Nature

Monday, February 7th 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Ensure that the contributions of natural resources to human well-being are explicitly recognized and valued and that maintaining their health is a primary objective.

This meeting will be held virtually via Webex.

[Join the meeting online](#)

Join the meeting by phone. Call 1-415-655-0001; access code 2312 685 4380.

If you have questions about this meeting, please contact Megan Benjamin mbejamin@baltimorecountymd.gov

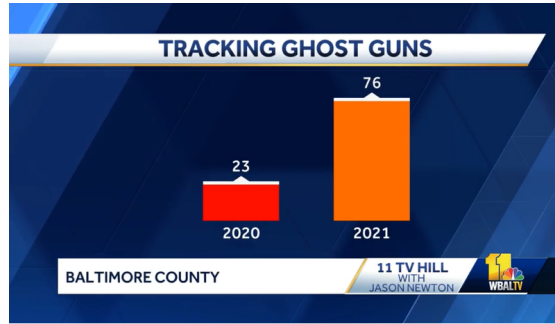
All meetings will held virtually and will begin at 6:00 pm. You can also find links to the meetings on the [Master Plan 2030 website](#). Make sure you also add the Master Plan 2030 meetings to your calendar!



Ghost Guns Threaten Our Community:

On January 21st, a 15 year-old was shot in a school bathroom in Montgomery County with a 9mm ghost gun. Ghost guns are unlicensed, unregistered, & untraceable guns that are assembled from otherwise non-lethal materials.

The General Assembly is moving quickly to regulate these weapons which are a growing menace in our communities.



The image is a WBAL report from Baltimore County Police Ghost gun seizures from 2020 to 2021.

Red Cross Blood Shortage

The Red Cross is facing it's worst blood shortage in more than a decade two years into the coronavirus pandemic, forcing some doctors in Maryland to delay blood transfusions. Donations decreased by 34% last year - so please give if you can!

Find a drive near you: [Red Cross Blood Drives](#)

Baltimore City Fire Fighters Lost

Three firefighters were lost in West Baltimore last Monday after a partial collapse trapped them in a burning home. A fourth firefighter was released from shock trauma on Thursday the same day that one of the deceased was posthumously promoted to lieutenant.

The memorial will be held at the Baltimore Convention Center at 10am on Wednesday, Feb. 2.

Our hearts go out to their families and we honor them for their service and sacrifice to keep the people of this area safe.

Robert Bannaky: His Life and Legacy Sunday, February 6th 1:00 pm at Benjamin Banneker Park

Explore the life of Robert Bannaky, Benjamin Banneker's father, as we discuss the experiences of free African Americans in Maryland in the mid-18th century. What difficulties did Robert face? How was he able to pay for the land with tobacco? Discover how property rights worked during the early development of our nation.

Mask Mandate to be lifted in Baltimore County

Face coverings will no longer be required in indoor public spaces in Baltimore County starting Tuesday, February 1st and the state of emergency will be lifted on February 7th.

Committee Assignments and Caucus Memberships

- Deputy Majority Whip
- Appropriations Committee
- Oversight Subcommittee on Personnel - Chair
- Joint Committee on the Management of Public Funds - House Chair
- Joint Committee on Cybersecurity, Information Technology, and Biotechnology - House Chair
- Capital Budget Subcommittee
- Health and Social Services Subcommittee

- Baltimore County Delegation - Chair
- Veterans Caucus - Chair

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