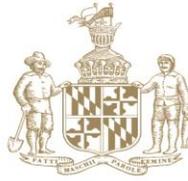


BROOKE E. LIERMAN
Legislative District 46
Baltimore City



The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 311
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3319 · 301-858-3319
800-492-7122 Ext. 3319
Brooke.Lierman@house.state.md.us

Appropriations Committee
Oversight Committee on Pensions
Transportation and the Environment
Subcommittee

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

2016 END OF SESSION REPORT

After a demanding 90 days, the General Assembly’s 2016 legislative session has ended. From January 13th – April 11th, the General Assembly met to debate and pass bills that affect residents across the State, including the FY17 operating and capital budgets. I have continued to advocate for causes important to Baltimore, including more efficient and effective transportation, criminal justice reform, environmental issues, and support for Baltimore City and its schools. I am excited to share my second **End of Session Report** to keep you updated on my work in Annapolis this year.

In this report, I’ll provide updates and summaries on the major issues from this session, but with limited space I cannot report on all of the bills that we worked on. To read more, please sign up for my email updates and visit my blog at www.brookelierman.com. If at any time you have questions or concerns, don’t hesitate to contact my office at (410) 841-3319 or brooke.lierman@house.state.md.us.

The Baltimore City Package

This year I worked with my colleagues to pass a \$300 million package of bills dedicated to improving and expanding services in Baltimore. The “Baltimore City Package” includes the following bills, which all passed this year:

- [Apprenticeship Career Training in Our Neighborhoods \(ACTION\) Program](#) (HB 290) – Creates an apprenticeship program that provides employers \$1,000 per new apprentice and is targeted to zip codes with poverty rates of at least 20%.
- [P-TECH Schools Act of 2016](#) (HB 464) – Helps fund a model that allows students to graduate from public high school with a diploma and an associate degree or other pre-apprenticeship or career certificate. Two Baltimore City High Schools will offer this new program.
- [Smart Demolition and Smart Growth Impact Fund](#) (HB 686) – Codifies the Strategic Demolition Program that provides state funding to local governments, including millions for Baltimore.
- [Baltimore Regional Neighborhood Initiative](#) (HB 684) – Codifies the successful neighborhood revitalization grant program with an annual appropriation of \$12 million starting in FY18 to provide flexible funding to community development corporations in designated and under-served communities (including Southeast Baltimore, Brooklyn, and Curtis Bay).
- [Seed Community Development Anchor Institution Fund](#) (HB 1400) – Provides matching state funds to anchor institutions to leverage their resources in under-served communities.
- [Enoch Pratt Free Library Funding](#) (HB 1401) – Provides funding for expanded access to public libraries and bolsters the role of libraries as community anchors.

- [Next Generation Scholars of Maryland](#) (HB 1403) – Expands eligibility to 7th and 8th grade students for the Guaranteed Access Grant program. This Grant provides college scholarships to students who meet a rigorous academic and social criteria through middle and high school.

FY17 Operating & Capital Budgets

I serve on the Appropriations Committee, and two of its subcommittees – the Transportation and Environment Subcommittee and the Pensions Subcommittee. Much of my time and effort during session involved work in these committees on our state’s FY17 operating and capital budgets. Under the Maryland Constitution, the General Assembly must pass a balanced budget each year. Maryland has a “strong executive” model: the Governor proposes the initial budget early in session and the Assembly can then only cut or restrict funds in the operating budget (although it can add to the capital budget).

Some highlights of the FY17 budgets include:

<p>Commitment to Public Schools In the budget, the State’s support for public schools exceeds \$6.3 billion. The budget also includes \$19.4 million for five school systems that have lost enrollment and aid in recent years, including over \$10 million for Baltimore. An additional \$19 million in budgetary savings is restricted for grants to help school systems fund the increase in their share of teachers’ retirement costs. Community colleges will receive a 5.4% funding increase.</p>	<p>Providing Vital Health Care Services This budget provides nearly \$10 billion in funding for Medicaid, including \$346 million for rate increases for health care providers. The Affordable Care Act has expanded Medicaid coverage to an additional 1.2 million Marylanders. The budget also includes over \$63 million for the developmentally disabled and \$36 million for the required 3.5% community provider increase to help ensure patients are able to find doctors who take Medicaid and that providers for the developmentally disabled are appropriately paid.</p>
<p>Structurally Balanced The operating budget is balanced and closes the structural deficit. Ongoing general fund revenues exceed ongoing expenses by \$139 million. We have a general fund balance of over \$400 million, and our Rainy Day Fund exceeds \$1 billion. The budget fully funds our pension obligations as well.</p>	<p>Protecting Natural Resources & Promoting the Arts Our budget fully funds the Chesapeake Bay 2010 Trust Fund for the first time since its creation. The budget also adds \$60 million in funding to land preservation programs over the next two years. The budget includes a record \$20.3 million appropriation for the Maryland Arts Council.</p>
<p>Focusing Resources on Substance Abuse Treatment and Opioid Addiction This budget provides a \$12 million increase for treatment of substance abuse disorders, including \$5.4 million for new and expanded services and treatment for individuals with a substance abuse disorder, \$3.7 million for initiatives recommended by the Governor’s Emergency Task Force, and \$3 million to increase the number of placements available for court commitments to treatment. The budget also has a 2.0% increase for all behavioral health providers.</p>	<p>Reporting Requirements from Agencies Through budget narrative, I worked with the Committee to secure language requiring DNR to submit plans to maintain & expand state parks; Dept. of Planning to report on status of preservation programs; DLLR to report on enforcement of wage/hour laws; University of Maryland to provide information on the fees its schools charge; and MDE/MDA to report whether they have adequate staff to enforce environmental regulations. Other budget language will require additional reports from other Agencies.</p>

The FY17 Capital Budget – Local Projects

The District 46 team secured funding for multiple projects in our district, including the following: Port Discovery - \$500,000; Baltimore Regional Ed & Training Center (CASA & SE CDC collaboration) - \$430,000; Creative Alliance - \$250,000; Leadenhall Community Outreach Center - \$500,000; The Baltimore Museum of Industry - \$200,000; Peale Museum - \$400,000; Healthcare for the Homeless Dental Clinic - \$17,500.

For more information on the State budgets, visit: www.brookelieman.com/news/FY17Budgets

My 2016 Legislation

In addition to supporting the Baltimore City legislative package and advocating on other major bills this session, I worked hard to pass several pieces of legislation that I introduced, including:

Transportation Transparency & Accountability

- [Maryland Transit Administration Oversight and Planning Board \(HB 1010\)](#) – This bill creates an MTA Oversight and Planning Board, codifies existing advisory councils, and requires MTA to begin engaging in comprehensive planning for transit systems in the greater Baltimore region. The Board will allow for increased effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability to the people and local governments that MTA serves. *This bill is on its way to the Governor's desk!*
- [Maryland Open Transportation Investment Decision Act of 2016 \(HB 1013\)](#) – Although not the lead sponsor, I was asked by my Committee Chair to be the Floor Leader on this important transparency bill. I lead the floor debate to both pass the bill and to override the Governor's veto. HB 1013 requires MDOT to create a project-scoring system based on our state transportation goals to provide objective and transparent data on certain projects in MTA/SHA.

Promoting Strong Communities

- [Community Cleanup and Greening Act of 2016 \(HB 31\)](#) – Plastic bags make up a large percentage of the litter in our neighborhood streets, communities, and waterways, including streams and rivers that flow to the Chesapeake Bay. HB 31 would have banned disposable plastic bags and required retailers to charge 10 cents for each paper bag requested by a customer. Unfortunately, the bill died this year when the Committee gave it an unfavorable report.
- [Civil Penalties for Shoplifting and Employee Theft–Repeal \(HB 190\)](#) – Current law allows for private corporations to send extortionate letters demanding up to \$1000 in compensation to people they suspect of shoplifting or theft (regardless of guilt). The original bill would have repealed the law. In its final form, it reforms the law to provide safeguards for innocent consumers, and requires reporting by any company wishing to engage in this practice. *This bill is on its way to the Governor's desk!*

Promoting College Savings & Cutting Red Tape

- [Income Tax Subtraction Modification – College Savings Plans \(HB 335\)](#) – This bill reduces the administrative burden of saving money in a college savings account by allowing anyone to take the available deduction (of up to \$2,500) for investing in a student's §529 college savings plan. It reduces red tape and encourages saving for college. *It is on its way to the Governor's desk!*

Protecting Children and Seniors

- [Alicia's Law \(HB 1490/SB 864\)](#) – More than 10,000 computers have been identified as trading depictions of child sexual exploitation in Maryland. This bill creates a special fund to investigate and prosecute internet-based crimes & sexual exploitation of children. It will provide \$2 million per year to law enforcement and child advocacy centers. *SB 864 is on its way to the Governor's desk!*
- [Food Stamp Program – Minimum Benefit \(HB 445\)](#) – Over 29,000 Marylanders receive only \$16 per month to help pay for food. Because the federal government has cut the SNAP program, many Marylanders – especially seniors – are going hungry. This bill supplements the federal SNAP benefits to ensure that no Maryland SNAP recipient aged 62 or over will receive less than \$30 a month. *This bill is on its way to the Governor's desk!*

Other Major Legislation

I am also proud to have co-sponsored other important measures that passed this year, including:

- [Justice Reinvestment Act \(SB 1005\)](#) – One of the most important bills the House passed this session, the JRA, could be called the “Smart on Crime Act.” This bill enacts several proven and important criminal justice reforms, including expanded use of drug treatment instead of jail, and additional expungement & reentry resources. I offered an amendment that was adopted to fund re-entry programs through the use of an opportunity compact or social impact bond. *Passed.*
- [Clean Energy Jobs Act \(HB 1106\)](#) – Increase the State’s use of solar energy and the total amount of clean energy required under the State’s Renewable Portfolio Standard. *Passed.*
- [Freedom to Vote Act \(HB 1007\)](#) – Lowers the barrier that voter registration causes by requiring various state agencies and boards of elections to adopt measures that increase access. *Passed.*
- [Public Safety and Policing Workgroup Recommendations \(HB 1016\)](#) – Focuses on police accountability and will address training, mental health evaluations, community policing, whistleblower protections, and civilian participation on police review panels. *Passed.*
- [Maryland Healthy Working Families Act \(HB 580\)](#) – Requires businesses with more than 15 employees to provide earned sick leave to employees who work 8+ hours per week. *Passed the House; failed in the Senate.*
- [Baltimore City – Pub Crawl Promoter’s Permits \(HB 1068\)](#) – Creates a permit process to help the City regulate pub crawls. *Passed both chambers.*
- [Ken Capone Equal Employment Act \(HB 420\)](#) – Phases out the use of sub-minimum wages for employees with a disability. *Passed both chambers.*

Constituent Services

Over the past 90 days, I received over 1,215 contacts from constituents! I love hearing from you and do my best to respond to each person with a thoughtful reply. Here is a rough breakdown on topics:

Environmental Issues – 305+ contacts (Poultry litter, pollinator, bag ban, animal rights etc.)	Transportation Issues – 45+ contacts (Transportation package, MTA board, farebox recovery repeal, etc.)
Budgetary and Tax Issues – 75+ contacts (Program open space, bond bills, earned income tax credit, etc.)	Education Issues – 105+ contacts (Education tax credit, standardized testing, etc.)
Criminal Justice Issues – 245+ contacts (Override vetoes, legalize marijuana, justice reinvestment, police accountability, etc.)	Health Issues – 185+ contacts (Keep the Door Open Act, earned sick leave, etc.)

If you are facing any difficulty working with a State agency or have other concerns, please contact my office. My (new) legislative aide, Michele Lambert, or I will be happy to work with you to try to remedy the issue. **Our office phone number is (410) 841-3319, and Michele and I can be reached by email at brooke.lierman@house.state.md.us.** Please keep in touch.

My best,



Brooke