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A new Maryland law requires that evidence of sexual assault be kept for 20 years.

Maryland Leads the Nation in Response To Sexual Assault, Victims Advocates Say

By TRIMMEL GOMES
Public News Service (MD)

ANNAPOLIS, MD—Thanks to the Maryland General Assembly's rapid response and passage of several laws to help victims of sexual assault, some victim advocates say the state

is leading the country in its handling of sexual harassment and assault cases.

Last year, several laws took effect, including a provision known as "no means no," saying that evidence of physical resistance is not required to prove that a sexual crime has taken

place. The Maryland General Assembly now has formed a commission to examine workplace polices on sexual harassment in all three branches of state government.

Lisae Jordan, executive director and counsel with the Maryland Coalition Against

Sexual Assault, has been named a member of the assembly.

"The Maryland General Assembly is ahead of the country in terms of responding to issues of sexual assault," Jordan said.

See **ADVOCATES** Page A3

PG County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III Testifies on Behalf of Maryland Senate Bill-92

By PRESS OFFICER
PG County Government

UPPER MARLBORO, MD—Yesterday, Prince George's County Executive testified before the Maryland Senate Budget & Taxation Committee on behalf of SB-92—*The Maryland School Overcrowding Reduction Act of 2018*. SB-92 provides state incentive funds to repair old SCHOOL buildings more quickly, reduce overcrowding, and incentivize better maintenance. To encourage local school systems to stretch their limited funds and keep schools in good condition, the bill boosts the state cost sharing for RENOVATED or new schools with costs at least 30% less per student THAN the average new school and promotes public/private partnerships to construct and maintain schools. To view the Twitter/Periscope broadcast of County Executive Baker's testimony please click here: <https://twitter.com/CountyExecBaker/status/958786224398962688>

"Our school system has identified over \$8 billion in Capital needs over the next 20 years," testified Prince George's County Executive Rushern Baker, III. "We will never reach that level of funding through the current funding processes at the State and County levels. Senator Rosapepe understands this challenge

as well as anyone, and he has worked diligently on an "outside of the box" strategy. *Senate Bill 92* allows the inclusion of innovation and creativity of the private sector to increase productivity while reducing costs."

School overcrowding and building deterioration is a major problem across the state. Today, 65,297 students are in 2,839 temporary classrooms. \$23.3 billion in estimated statewide school construction funding is needed for FY's 2019-2023.

"We know why too many Maryland children go to schools which are too cold, too hot or over crowded," said Senator James Rosapepe (D-District 21). "The State and counties have been slow to boost competition in bidding, use 21st century construction methods and materials, and right size design to accelerate building. SB 92 says the State will reward school systems which innovate."

Submitted Testimony of
County Executive Baker

Chairman Kasemeyer and Vice Chair Madaleno, and members of the Budget and Taxation Committee, Prince George's County supports the core principles behind SB 92—flexibility and innovation.

See **BILL-92** Page A7

Giant Food Moves Headquarters Back to Prince George's County

A Statement From County Executive Baker

By PRESS OFFICER
PG County Government

UPPER MARLBORO, MD—Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III, released this statement following news that Giant Food will be moving their headquarters back to Landover, MD which will result in 220 jobs and 78 new hires returning to the County.

"On behalf of the residents and business community of Prince George's County, I want

to welcome back Giant Food to their home and newly renovated headquarters in Landover, MD. When Giant Food moved their headquarters out of Prince George's County to Pennsylvania following their 1998 merger with sister company Giant Martin's, our County was disappointed yet resilient and vigilant for them to someday return to Landover.

See **GIANT FOOD** Page A5

PGCPS Present Response to Graduation Audit to State Board

By PRESS OFFICER
PGCPS

UPPER MARLBORO, MD—Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) Chief Executive Officer Dr. Kevin M. Maxwell today presented an overview to the Maryland State Board of Education of a detailed action plan sent last month in response to the State's audit of high school graduation rates.

The school system's plan aims to improve accuracy and accountability in grading, and protect the academic integrity of the graduation certification process.

"We took the audit findings and recommendations very seriously and have begun making improvements," Dr. Maxwell said. "I care, a great deal, about

See **AUDIT** Page A3

Police Chiefs' Association Prince George's County Installs New Officers

Sheriff Melvin C. High First Sheriff to Serve as President

By PRESS OFFICER
Office of the Sheriff

UPPER MARLBORO, MD—Sheriff Melvin C. High was installed as president of the Police Chiefs' Association of Prince George's County—the first Sheriff to serve as the Association president.

Sheriff High and other officers were sworn in by Judge C. Philip Nichols, Jr. during an installation ceremony at the Association's regular monthly meeting. Other Association officers sworn in were: Bowie Police Chief John Nesky—Vice-President, Prince George's County Police Chief Hank Stawinski, III—Secretary, Laurel City Police Chief Richard McLaughlin—Treasurer, and Cottage City and Colmar Manor Police Chief William Lowry—Member-At-Large.

In acknowledging recent Past President, University of Maryland Police Chief David B. Mitchell, Sheriff High said, "I'm taking over an organization that's well positioned to



New officers being sworn in

PHOTO COURTESY OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

address the public safety concerns of the county thanks to the outstanding leadership of Chief Mitchell."

On the importance of the Association, Sheriff High said, "The Police Chiefs' Association

brings together a wealth of law enforcement leadership and experience to collaborate on matters related to the safety of the communities we all serve. We are advocates and partners with our communities and a resource

to the legislative bodies at the local, county, and state level. I'm proud to serve."

For more information contact the Prince George's County Sheriff's Press Information Office at 301-780-2773.

INSIDE

The '#MeToo' Movement Could Buoy Success for Maryland Bills

The bill is spearheaded by Dumais, who said it is in better shape than when it was first introduced 10 years ago. House Speaker Michael Busch, D-Anne Arundel, sat in on the Jan. 18 House bill hearing and voiced his support for the bill as well.

Community, Page A3

Will Congress Keep Its Promise To the Dreamers?

If the Dreamers are deported, the United States will lose more than \$280 billion in economic contribution. Plus, the deportations would cost more than \$60 billion additional tax dollars.

Commentary, Page A4

Maryland Joins Partnership Encouraging Young Women to Explore Careers in Cybersecurity

Open to female high school students, the GirlsGoCyberStart initiative encourages participants to explore their interests in cyber studies, learn core cybersecurity skills, and build confidence in problem-solving.

Business, Page A5

Movie Review: *Coco*

While preparing photos of departed loved ones for Dia de Muertos, Miguel finds evidence that his infamous great-great-grandfather was none other than his idol, Ernesto de la Cruz (Benjamin Bratt), a legendary musician who died many years ago and is still beloved throughout Mexico.

Out on the Town, Page A6

Earth Talk

Dear EarthTalk:

What are so-called "intentional communities"? And are there any in the U.S. that are sustainability-focused?

—Elissa McNeal,
Washington, D.C.

Features, Page A7

Towns and NEIGHBORS

In and Around Morningside-Skyline

by Mary McHale 301 735 3451

Dept. of Parks & Recreation searching for Centenarians

Special recognition will be given to centenarians—residents who are 100 years and older—at a special Centenarian Celebration planned for May.

But all Prince Georgians 90 years and older (by Jan. 1, 2018) are also invited.

Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission's Department of Parks and Recreation is hoping you will help them find these 90+ residents. Forward information to them no later than Feb. 16. Contact the Centenarian Coordinator at 301-206-3375 (TTY 301-699-2544). Names of those provided will be mailed invitations. RSVP confirmations will be required.

For more information, go to <http://www.pgparcs.com/2666/Signature-Events>.

People

Dwight Floyd Holloway, Jr. and Michele Marie Gaudes were married Jan. 28 at the Army Navy Country Club in Arlington. Dwight is the son of the late Dwight Sr. and Ruby Holloway, of Skyline; Michele is the daughter of Jeanette Drolshagen of Fall River, WI, and the late Rueben Bork. Rev. George Madison was celebrant. Beautiful classical music was by Arvid and Ragnhild Petersen of Porsgrunn, Norway. The newly-weds will make their home in Annapolis.

Jill (Flaherty) Kimmel, formerly of Skyline, emailed an update on her sons: Terry has three grown children and is in the lumber business. TJ has two boys and is a store manager with Martins/Giant. And, sad to report, Matthew has been very ill with dementia and is in assisted living. Years ago these guys used to mow my lawn.

Jeff Brunson emailed me about his days on Pine Grove

Drive where he lived from 1947 to 1960 when his family moved to SE Washington, near the city limits. I'll run some of his fun memories in next week's column.

Highland Tea at Darnall's Chance

Spend a cozy winter afternoon at Darnall's Chance Museum and partake in a traditional Scottish tea on Saturday, Feb. 24, at 2 p.m. The museum overlooks School House Pond in Upper Marlboro, at 14800 Governor Oden Bowie Drive.

Admission is \$25 (\$32 for non-County residents). Capacity is limited; reservation and payment is required in advance. For reservations or information, call 301-952-8010.

Wear plaid and be entered in a drawing for Scottish-themed door prizes.

Changing landscape

Are you old enough to remember when the Air and Space Museum opened on the Mall in 1976? It was thrilling! I think I saw its IMAX film *To Fly* at least a dozen times (admission was about 50¢). Well, now nine airlines are donating \$28 million to Air and Space for a makeover. In a year or so, I'll have to go again.

County Exec Baker has announced Giant Food will be moving its headquarters back to Landover from Pennsylvania. It moved there in 1998 following merger with a sister company. This move will result in 220 jobs and 78 new hires returning to Prince George's.

The Visitor Control Center, which controls entry to Andrews by checking IDs and background to see if you can enter the base, is no longer open on Saturdays. The reason is: very few people wanted to enter on Saturday. Future hours will be Monday

through Friday, 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. with closures on weekends and federal holidays.

Forestville Pregnant Center

The Forestville Pregnancy Center was founded 34 years ago in Forestville. But a few years back there was an explosion in Penn Mar that destroyed or seriously damaged several shops and offices, including theirs. And so they moved to Marlow Heights where they've continue their mission of saving babies.

Their latest newsletter reports that over those 34 years they've worked with 24,041 clients. They've had 420 volunteers (162,101 volunteer hours). And most amazing: there are 3,900 saved babies who've reached 18 years of age.

For more information: www.forestvillepregnancycenter.org.

Did you know ...

... that Surrattsville High School has an outstanding Law Academy program involving local attorneys? Are you familiar with the P-TECH Academy program at Frederick Douglass HS where a student earns both college credit and a HS diploma in technology? How about Friendly HS's Health and Sciences Academy for medical and science careers? Or Gwynn Park HS's Fire Cadet or Environmental Studies Academies? Have you heard about Croom Vocational's Electrical or Information Technology programs?

These are just some of the great career academy and specialty programs offered at south county Prince George's high schools in Council and School District 9.

See SKYLINE Page A8

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301 888 2153

DANCING THROUGH SOUTH AFRICA

Come and explore South Africa, Thursday, February 15, 2018 at 10:15 AM and 12:00 Noon, Lesole's Dance Project: Dancing Through South Africa. The performance is recommended for grades K-3. Curriculum Connections include Dance, Music, Social Studies, Language Arts and World Languages. Part of this fascinating program shows how dance encourages people in difficult times and promotes a deeper understanding among people of diverse backgrounds and traditions.

This performance is being presented at Prince George's Publick Playhouse for the Performing Arts, 5445 Landover Road, Cheverly Maryland 20784. Tickets cost \$8/person, \$6/groups of 20 or more. Free to qualifying Title I Schools. Call 301-277-1710, TTY 301-699-2544. Ample bus parking. For more information, visit the website at www.arts.pgparcs.com/1642/Arts.

2018 SPRING SOCCER ACADEMY

Join the Opdea Soccer Club for the fun and games if your child is ready to learn and play soccer. Saturday Soccer Academy Teams are coed (boys and girls). Players will be able to learn the rules and skills of soccer (passing, dribbling, goalie, offense and defense positions, and teamwork). Academy graduates recruited for Opdea Eagles

2018 PG County recreation soccer teams. No residency requirements. Games are at Tanglewood Park, 8401 Woodyard Road, Clinton, Maryland. Register online: www.Opdeainc.org

BASKET WEAVING CLASSES

Basket Weaving (Pine Needle Coil Basket) classes are being offered for ages 13 and up Saturday, February 24, 2018 (#15602-114C) from 10:00 AM-3:00 PM. Fee is \$30 R (\$39 NR). Classes are for students of all skill levels, beginner to advanced. Materials are supplied by instructor. Email class instructor, Pam King (pking@umd.edu), for additional information. Bring a bag lunch and a drink. Classes are held at Clear Nature Center, Costa Regional Park 11000 Thrift Road Clinton, Maryland 20735-9764.

CHANGE A LIFETIME

Open your home, give hope and share your heart. Learn about foster parenting. Call today 301-429-2370 or visit www.concern4kids.org. Do you want to make a difference to children who need a foster parent? Make a difference to these children, guiding them to a healthy, responsible adulthood.

THE STUDENT SHUTTLE

The Student Shuttle is reliable and affordable Transportation Service for your kids. They offer after school drop off, before school home pick up, transportation to/from after school ac-

tivities, transportation for school field trips and transportation to/from summer camps.

The vehicles are clean and reliable and fully insured. The drivers are experienced and licensed. Federal background checks on all drivers. Exceptional Parent references available. Excellent payment plans. For more information or to schedule a pick up call/text 301-806-0188 or send an email to THESTUDENTSHUTTLEDVMV@GMAIL.COM.

EARLY LEARNERS-FUTURE LEADERS

Future Leaders Learning Center LLC (Early Learners and Future Leaders) is located at 9000 Cheltenham Drive, Brandywine, Maryland 20613. Their staff is highly qualified and experienced. The center provides intensive curriculum for Pre School and Pre K, creative activities and educational games, summer enrichment program, homework assistance, before and after school, and many more learning activities. Evening and week-end tutorial services, one on one tutoring on all subject areas SAT/PARCC preparation are provided. Free breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack is provided.

The Center is open from Monday to Friday, 6:30 AM to 6:30 PM (Full time and Part time). For more information, call 240-823-7176 (office) or email them at the following email address: futureleaders644@gmail.com.

Neighborhoods

Maryland Mortgage Program Announces New Loan and Down Payment Assistance Products

NEW CARROLLTON, MD—The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development recently announced new loan and down payment assistance products and debuted a redesigned website for the Maryland Mortgage Program before an audience of lenders, realtors, counselors, mortgage insurers, and other program partners. New Maryland Mortgage Program products include a mortgage loan developed for borrowers with mid-range credit scores, a down payment assistance grant designed to be used with specific Freddie Mac mortgages, and the expansion of one of the department's existing grant programs for down payment assistance to make it applicable to more types of mortgages. These new initiatives will expand access to the program for lower income homebuyers as well as those struggling with credit issues, down payment, or closing costs.

"Homeownership strengthens Maryland's communities, and homebuying strengthens Maryland's economy," said Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development Secretary Kenneth C. Holt. "The Maryland Mortgage Program provides homebuyers with competitive rates and the peace of mind of a loan backed by the State of Maryland. In particular, the program's down payment assistance options set our mortgage products apart from many other loans by helping to provide extra cash at settlement."

For down payment assistance, the department announced that the Maryland Mortgage Program's existing Maryland 4% Grant Assist can now be used for down payment assistance for Federal Housing Administration (FHA) loans as well as conventional, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), or United States Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) loans. In an effort to increase access to homeownership for lower income homebuyers, the department also announced the creation of the Maryland 6% Opportunity Grant for use by income-selected homebuyers with down payment and closing costs associated with purchasing a home for Freddie Mac Housing Finance Agencies (HFA) Advantage mortgages only. The department also announced the new Maryland Credit 640 program which was developed to assist homebuyers with FICO scores in the 640-659 range with purchasing a home in Maryland. Along with these program enhancements, the department also highlighted its efforts to streamline processes for program lending partners and a new program website, <http://mmp.maryland.gov>, redesigned to be more user-friendly and responsive for customers.

The department presented the new enhancements and processes before an audience of nearly 300 program partners at the Westin Annapolis hotel on January 19. In addition to remarks from Secretary Holt and program announcements from Assistant Secretary and Community Development Administration Director Matthew Heckles, attendees had an op-

portunity to hear from Boyd Campbell, president of the Maryland REALTORS and Ernie Grue, member of the Board of Governors for the Maryland Mortgage Bankers & Brokers Association, two partner organizations that are key supporters of the Maryland Mortgage Program. The department also honored its top four performing lender partners - First Home Mortgage Corporation, PrimeLending, George Mason Mortgage, and Primary Residential Mortgage, Inc. For the third year in a row, Mr. Naji Rashid was recognized as the Maryland Mortgage Program's top producing realtor.

The Maryland Mortgage Program has been the state's flagship homeownership program for more than 35 years, providing fixed-rate mortgages, primarily to first-time homebuyers, along with down payment and closing cost incentives. From Fiscal Year 2015 through Fiscal Year 2017, the Maryland Mortgage Program assisted more than 7,800 homebuyers with mortgages valued at over \$1.5 billion and over \$39 million in down payment assistance. For more information about the program and its new initiatives, visit <http://mmp.maryland.gov>.

BGE Crews Aiding in Puerto Rico Recovery Efforts

Deployment is Part of Larger Exelon Response

BALTIMORE, MD—Baltimore Gas and Electric is deploying crews to help restore electric service in Puerto Rico as part of a contingent of Exelon utilities responding to the request to provide mutual assistance. BGE joins its sister utilities—Atlantic City Electric, ComEd, Delmarva Power, PECO and Pepco—in repairing infrastructure destroyed during the hurricane in September.

Twenty-one BGE line workers and support staff are expected to depart for Puerto Rico in mid-February. In advance of their departure, BGE vehicles including bucket trucks, are being transported via barge to the island. Those vehicles are expected to arrive in Puerto Rico in early February.

"We are happy to provide assistance to the people of Puerto Rico and do so without jeopardizing our ability to respond to outages in our central Maryland service area, said Stephen J. Woerner, president and chief operating officer of BGE. "Our employees look forward to helping Puerto Rico rebuild its electric system and are committed to making a significant impact in getting Puerto Rico back to normal."

BGE's support comes after the Edison Electric Institute EEI and other power industry groups received a request from the Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority (PREPA) for mainland companies to provide assistance. Exelon is sending approximately 140 utility workers as part of the U.S. response, bringing to nearly 1,500, the number of restoration personnel from EEI member companies. With these additional crews, including the Exelon team, the total number of power restoration workers will increase to more than 5,500.

In addition to deploying restoration crews to Puerto Rico and other areas affected by recent hurricanes, BGE employees, along with the Exelon Foundation, have contributed more than \$800,000 to disaster relief efforts, including aid to Puerto Rico.

The Chesapeake Bay Blues Festival Receives the Keeping The Blues Alive Award for 2018

MEMPHIS, TN—Chesapeake Bay Events is honored to announce that the Chesapeake Bay Blues Festival (CBBF) has received the Keeping The Blues Alive Award from the Blues Foundation in Memphis Tennessee.

Don Hooker, founder and CEO of Chesapeake Bay Events and Saran Petska, Event Coordinator and Vice President of Chesapeake Bay Events accepted the award on behalf of all of the loyal fans who return to Sandy Point State park in Annapolis every May, the family and friends who volunteer year after year and the sponsors, without whom we could not succeed.

The festival is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. It is considered to be one of the premier Blues Festivals in the world. Outside of providing top caliber entertainment, the festival also gives ALL net proceeds to charity. Visit www.bayblues.org for more information.

2018 Lineup

- Brian Setzer and the Rockabilly Riot
- Kenny Wayne Shepherd Band
- Delbert McClinton
- Keb' Mo' Band
- Doyle Bramhall II
- Shemekia Copeland
- Mike Zito
- Mr. Sipp
- Chubby Carrier and the Bayou Swamp Band
- Heather Gillis Band
- Jerron "Blind Boy" Paxton
- Brandon "Taz" Niederauer
- Deanna Bogart Band

Festival information:

The Chesapeake Bay Blues Festival will be held on May 19th and 20th, 2018 at Sandy Point State Park in Annapolis, MD.

Tickets:

Tickets are on sale now. Early bird prices are available until February 28th.

- Saturday Ticket; \$60
- Sunday Ticket; \$60
- Two Day Ticket; \$110
- VIP Packages; SOLD OUT

Please visit our website www.bayblues.org for more information.

About the Charities

This year's recipients are: We Care and Friends, which is an organization providing a wide variety of services to the needy of Annapolis, and CAMP FANTASTIC, a camp for children with cancer which is operated by Special Love, Inc.

Media Contact:

Chesapeake Bay Events-Don Hooker, dhooker@bayblues.org, 410-257-7413

Chesapeake Bay Events-Sarah Petska, Event Coordinator sarahpetska@bayblues.org

COMMUNITY

The American Counseling Association's Counseling Corner

Helping To Improve Your Child's Self-Concept

It's probably not something you consciously think about, but as an adult you have a well-formed "self-concept," an understanding of who you are, where you fit in, what you're good at, what things you try to avoid, and a general sense about yourself as a person.

But for young children, especially at the age of puberty or early adolescence, their self-concept is just developing. This tends to be the times when children begin to form an identity of their own, one separate from their parents.

It's a time when peers become more important and when the opinions of peers often carry more weight than what Mom or Dad has to say. At the same time, the physical and emotional changes that are a normal part of development are taking place, too, often leaving the child feeling insecure and even scared.

For a child who isn't included in one of the more popular groups of students at school, he or she may develop feelings that "Nobody likes me," or "I don't have any friends." Such feelings and insecurities are a normal part of growing up for many children but can also have a variety of negative effects impacting academic performance and even bringing on significant depression in a child.

When this occurs being a parent means having special patience and understanding. You're likely to hear "You just don't understand," when you try to tell your child that he's wrong about how other children view him or her. He or she doesn't want to be told how to think. To help your child, try a different approach.

Even when you face a negative reaction, it's important to continue to give positive, reassuring feedback. Learn to really listen to your child's complaints and problems without being judgmental or critical. Be supportive and indicate that you understand.

If your child is showing clear signs of depression, from falling grades to withdrawing from favorite things, it's a time to seek professional help. Your child's school counselor can be a good place to start. In addition to having seen such problems many times, school counselors are trained to assist a child in learning how to think, rather than simply telling the child what to think.

A professional counselor can also help parents better understand what your child is experiencing, and can provide advice on dealing with the challenges you both are facing.

Counseling Corner is provided by the American Counseling Association. Comments and questions to ACAcorner@counseling.org or visit the ACA website at www.counseling.org

Audit from A1

the children in our schools and about Prince George's County as a whole. This is my home, it's where I graduated high school, and my children attended Prince George's County public schools. I began my career teaching here and I hope to finish my career by making life better for our students and county through education"

When the State auditor released its findings, PGCPSS acted on the recommendations immediately. Changes enacted to strengthen academic integrity in all high schools include:

- Prior to the start of the current school year, the school system implemented stricter controls on access to student grades;
- Grade and transcript managers attended mandatory training, and professional school counselors received additional time to update all student records for graduation certification.
- New processes were implemented for monitoring excessive grade changes and weekly grade input reports, including a review of the number of grades entered per week in the gradebook, missing report card grades and excessive absences.
- Upgraded technology includes the SchoolMAX student information system, and moving the grade-change process online to improve accuracy and accountability. The new digital grade-change form and process reduces paperwork for teachers, provides better monitoring of the total number of grade

changes and requires supporting documentation and proper approvals. PGCPSS will launch a grade-change pilot project in a few schools this spring before full implementation in the 2018-19 school year.

- Credit recovery programs were reviewed. The quarterly learning module 'packets' were discontinued and replaced by a new online platform, Edgenuity, which offers better monitoring and the courses that students need to stay on-track for graduation.

- Regular updates on implementation of audit recommendations have been sent to the PGCPSS community, in line with audit findings calling for increased communication.

- The school system will hire an independent third party to complete implementation of overall audit recommendations and conduct a random sampling of student grades and graduation requirements at select high schools annually.

In June 2017, Dr. Maxwell and a majority of the Board of Education submitted a formal request to the State Superintendent of Schools for an independent performance audit of PGCPSS graduation rates. MSDE notified the school system in September about the contract award to Alvarez & Marsal Public Sector Services to conduct the audit. Findings were released Nov. 3. The school system began making improvements before the release of the State audit findings.

*Proudly Serving
Prince George's County Since 1932*

The '#MeToo' Movement Could Buoy Success for Maryland Bills

By SEAN WHOOLEY
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS, MD—On January 30, 2018, a bill that would end parental rights of rapists passed both houses of the—among the most visible initiatives in Annapolis echoing a cultural shift in attitudes nationwide toward sexual assault and women's rights.

This legislation is one of a handful of bills that focus on combating sexual assault and domestic violence, including behavior that qualifies as domestic abuse and a bill addressing repeat sexual predators.

"The '#MeToo' movement has played a part in pointing out the importance of handling sexual assault and domestic violence and giving women a voice in courts," Delegate Kathleen Dumais, D-Montgomery, told the University of Maryland's Capital News Service earlier this January.

"#MeToo" was founded by Tarana Burke in 2006 but gained traction in 2017 when used as a hashtag on Twitter. Its goal is to "ensure survivors know they're not alone in their journey," according to its website.

A recent high-profile show of support came at the Golden Globe Awards on Jan. 7, when many renowned actors and actresses wore black to acknowledge the struggle of women, following the reported claims of abuse against well-known Hollywood figures like producer Harvey Weinstein and actor Kevin Spacey.

House Bill 1 and Senate Bill 2, which would both authorize a court to terminate the parental rights of an individual who has conceived a child without consent, passed in the House and Senate by unanimous votes.

The bills are expected to take effect upon enactment, but the

House and Senate measures, both emergency bills, have one difference: The Senate version has been amended to provide the right to counsel for the victim and the defendant.

The legislation must be identical on both sides if it is to become law; the chambers can, through further updates this session, ensure that the bills are identical.

The bill is spearheaded by Dumais, who said it is in better shape than when it was first introduced 10 years ago. House Speaker Michael Busch, D-Anne Arundel, sat in on the Jan. 18 House bill hearing and voiced his support for the bill as well.

"I am delighted to know it's come this far...I think that this might be the year," Dumais said last week.

Dumais said the support of Busch and Senate President Thomas V. "Mike" Miller Jr., D-Calvert, Charles, Prince George's, has been massive and the amount of legislators she's seen become more supportive of these issues over her 16 sessions is encouraging.

Executive Director and Counsel for the Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault Lisae Jordan, who testified and supports the bill, said she believes the "Me Too" movement has made legislators more aware of related issues, especially among women.

Beyond that, Jordan said, the allegations facing several powerful men in the national spotlight, which have resulted in the loss of both jobs and prestige, makes people think carefully about the issues, and leads her to believe more legislation on these matters will succeed.

"We are going to get some things done this year," Jordan said confidently last week.

Jordan was recently named to a 14-person panel set up to ex-

amine policies dealing with sexual harassment in the workplace.

The panel, slated to first meet on Feb. 16, will review state policies, receive input from business leaders and policy experts, hear public testimony and make recommendations to the General Assembly's state Legislative Policy Committee.

"We have tried to stay ahead of the curve in implementing national best practices in the Maryland General Assembly to prevent harassment of any kind," Busch said in the release. "This esteemed panel will help us continue to push forward to make this the safest legislative workplace in the country."

Other bills centering around the "Me Too" movement include House Bill 30, sponsored by Delegate Angela Angel, D-Prince George's. The proposed law changes the definition of "abuse" relating to domestic violence to include harassment and malicious destruction of property.

Mildred Muhammad, the former wife of John Allen Muhammad—a sniper who terrorized the D.C. metro area in 2002—testified and shared her story of being an intended target of her husband and how it related to domestic abuse.

"Everything that needs to be done in order to include this in the domestic violence language is vital," Muhammad said in her testimony.

Delegate Ariana Kelly, D-Montgomery, said the #MeToo movement had nothing to do with the success of House Bill 1. Instead, the press coverage from the failure of the bill last session and the fact it was "destined to pass" before the movement were the primary factors.

However, Kelly says #MeToo has started a change in culture in the halls of the State House.

"There's a new awareness of the kinds of obstacles that

women have been facing in politics, and in the workplace in general," Kelly said. "And I have sensed a really strong commitment from leadership that everyone feels safe."

On Jan. 23, the Senate Judiciary Committee met to discuss a bill sponsored by committee Chair Sen. Robert Zirkin, D-Baltimore County, that makes another attempt at the definition of abuse. His identical Senate bill 121 is cross-filed with Dumais' House bill 328.

Both proposals include misuse of telephone facilities and equipment, misuse of electronic communication or interactive computer service, revenge porn and visual surveillance.

The 2015 Uniform Crime Report revealed 30,534 domestic violence crimes reported in Maryland with 25,996 assault-specific crimes. An analysis of both domestic violence bills acknowledge they may increase the number of petitions for domestic violence orders, but cite no material impact on operations or finances of courts.

Two bills that permit the introduction of evidence of sexually assaultive behavior at a certain time are scheduled to be presented to the House Judiciary Committee on Wednesday. One is sponsored by the Hogan Administration, the other by Delegate Vanessa Atterbeary, D-Howard, but they are essentially identical.

Republican Gov. Larry Hogan supports the legislation, and an administration release said it will "give courts more tools to prosecute repeat sexual offenders."

Angel said last week the impact of the "Me Too" movement can't be measured until bills are actually passed, but she's observed far different reception and openness this year to the issues it covers.

Advocates from A1

"They made policy changes after the Billy Bush Trump tape and have continued to update their policies."

The General Assembly's Workplace Harassment Commission consists of 11 other women and two men. The panel will review state policies and so-

licit input from business leaders, the public and policy experts and make recommendations to the Legislative Policy Committee.

Jordan said it's important to have updated policies and procedures in place to reduce incidences of sexual harassment.

"This is another step in making sure that the environment at the General Assembly and

throughout the state of Maryland, including state government and the judiciary, is free of sexual harassment," she said; "and, when sexual harassment occurs, that survivors have a place to go that is independent and effective."

The General Assembly's Workplace Harassment Commission is chaired by Jeanne Hitchcock, who held two cabinet

positions in former Gov. Martin O'Malley's administration and senior posts in state and local government and the private sector. The state's latest sexual-harassment policy and procedures is available at the Maryland Department of Budget Management website at, www.dbm.maryland.gov/eo/Documents/Sex-HarassPolicy.pdf.

Remembering Frances K. Hoyert

Frances Keefauver Hoyert of Audubon, NJ, formerly of College Park, MD, left this world on Monday, January 29, 2018. She was 89. The loving wife of Robert S. Hoyert for over 62 years, Frances grew up in College Park, Maryland where she also attended the University of Maryland, graduating with honors in June, 1950 with a B.S. from the College of Education. She was a proud member of Alpha Delta Pi sorority. Subsequently she taught kindergarten and first grade in the Prince George's County School System. After excelling as a stay-at-home mother, she returned to the work force as a Customer Service Representative for Suburban Bank of Maryland from 1971-1985.

In Maryland, Frances was very involved with Berwyn Presbyterian Church where she served as the first Church Historian, set up the church's Archives, taught Sunday school, volunteered with Help-By-Phone, and served as a Deacon. She was honored as the daughter of a founding member of the church and sang in the church choir for over 50 years. She also sang with the Prince George's Choral Society.

In 2009, Frances and Robert relocated to Audubon, NJ to be nearer to their daughter, Margaret Westfield, and her family. There they became involved with First Presbyterian Church of Haddon Heights where Frances was a member of the Chancel Choir and the Women's Circle.

Throughout her life, Frances was interested in music, genealogy, antiques, and glass collecting. She loved cats, birds, and flowers. She swam and exercised regularly until recent years. In her 50s she took up competitive running and earned many top awards.

Frances was pre-deceased by her older brother, John D. Keefauver of Carmel, CA and is survived by her sister, Margaret F. of Houston, TX. In addition to her daughter, she is survived by her son-in-law, Michael M. Westfield, granddaughters Marina M. Westfield of Haddon Heights and Emily E. Westfield DeShantz (Louis) of Gibsonia, PA, and dear friend, Asata B. Hodge.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to Berwyn Presbyterian Church of Greenbelt, MD.

A Memorial Service to celebrate her life was held on Friday, February 2,



Frances K. Hoyert

2018 at 11:00am at First Presbyterian Church, 28 Seventh Ave., Haddon Heights, NJ 08035. Burial will be in the Keefauver Family plot at Pipe Creek Cemetery, Union Mill, MD

Online condolences made be made to www.jnzumbrunfuneralhome.com.

COMMENTARY

Benjamin L. Cardin United States Senator for Maryland



Senator Ben Cardin Releases Report Detailing Two Decades of Putin's Attacks on Democracy, Calling for Policy Changes to Counter Kremlin Threat Ahead of 2018, 2020 Elections

U.S. Remains Vulnerable to Russian Interference without Unequivocal Presidential Leadership, Learning Lessons from European Democracies

Top Foreign Relations Committee Democrat Makes Series of Recommendations to Counter Putin's Asymmetric Arsenal, Bolster Defenses Ahead of Future U.S., European, Elections

WASHINGTON, D.C.—A Senate Foreign Relations Committee Democratic staff report released Wednesday and commissioned by U.S. Senator Ben Cardin (D-Md.), the Committee's ranking member, details Russian president Vladimir Putin's nearly two decades-long assault on democratic institutions, universal values, and the rule of law across Europe and in his own country. The report comes one year after Senator Cardin introduced the Counteracting Russian Hostilities Act of 2017, which served as the basis for the sanctions package signed into law last August, and makes a series of recommendations to adequately bolster U.S. and European defenses and counter the growing Kremlin threat to democratic institutions.

"Putin's Asymmetrical Assault on Democracy in Russia and Europe: Implications for U.S. National Security," finds that President Trump's refusal to publicly acknowledge the threat posed by the Russian government has hampered efforts to mobilize our government, strengthen our institutions, and work with our European allies to counter Putin's interference in democracies abroad.

Never before in American history has so clear a threat to national security been so clearly ignored by a U.S. president, and without a strong U.S. response, institutions and elections here and throughout Europe will remain vulnerable to the Kremlin's aggressive and sophisticated malign influence operations.

"As the extent of Russia's obvious meddling in the 2016 U.S. election continues to be investigated, it is imperative that the American people better understand the true scope and scale of Putin's pattern of undermining democracy in Russia and across Europe. That is why I commissioned this report shortly after the 2016 election," Senator Cardin said. "This threat existed long before President Trump took office, and unless he takes action now, it will continue long after his administration. While President Trump stands practically idle, Mr. Putin continues to refine his asymmetric arsenal and look for future opportunities to disrupt governance and erode support for the democratic and international institutions that the United States and Europe have built over the last 70 years.

"President Trump must be clear-eyed about the Russian threat, take action to strengthen our government's response and our institutions, and—as have other president's in times of crisis—mobilize our country and work with an international coalition to counter the threat and assert our values," Cardin continued.

Across eight chapters and several appendices, the report meticulously details the tools the Russian government has repeatedly deployed from its asymmetric arsenal, and how the Kremlin has

See ELECTIONS Page A5

Marc Morial, President and CEO National Urban League



Will Congress Keep Its Promise To the Dreamers?

"Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) for me was a way of coming up for air after having been underwater all my life in a sea of uncertainty. I was able to catch my breath, but I was not yet on a boat back to land. DACA allowed me to work legally, have a Social Security number, open a bank account, and have something as simple as a state ID. Most importantly, DACA provided me with a license to dream."

—Ms. Guzman, a Dreamer writing semi-anonymously in *Fortune Magazine*.

While the debate rages daily on op-ed pages and on cable news, the nation won't know until next month whether a Congressional deal to protect Dreamers will be successful. What we know right now is that protecting Dreamers is the right thing to do.

The Senate deal to keep the government funded through February 8 includes a commitment to vote on a solution that would address the status of young people brought to the United States by their parents when they were children. The Trump Administration in September announced an end to Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), the program that protected them from deportation and allowed them to attend school and work.

About 90 percent of Americans believe that those covered under DACA—commonly known as "Dreamers"—should be permitted to remain in the United States—the country that is their home, the only they've ever known. Of those who are committed to legal status for Dreamers, many have criticized the Senate deal because

they do not believe Senate leadership can be trusted to maintain commitment to a vote. On the other side are those who believe the bargain—which also included a six-year extension of the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), ultimately will end with the result all players have declared they want: legal status—and eventual citizenship—for Dreamers.

President Trump reiterated his support for Dreamers this week, saying he wants them to be able to become citizens. House Speaker Paul Ryan made a highly-publicized promise to a young Dreamer at a nationally-televised town hall that he did not want to see her deported and wanted to help her "get right with the law." Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell also has said he has sympathy for the Dreamers.

To the extent the general hostility of some Americans toward immigrants is based on wildly inaccurate stereotypes, no group could go further in exploding those false impressions than the Dreamers. Their employment rate exceeds that of the native-born population, with more than 90% of them working. About 65,000 graduate from high school each year, and 10,000 graduate from college. They pay \$2 billion in state and local taxes, and are ineligible for safety net program benefits and most government subsidies. About 900 are currently serving in the U.S. Armed Forces.

If the Dreamers are deported, the United States will lose more than \$280 billion in economic contribution. Plus, the deportations would cost more than \$60 billion additional tax dollars.

The United States is at a crossroads. Deportation of Dreamers would be a shameful stain on our history, diminishing our standing in the international community. Allowing them to remain in limbo, living with the looming disaster of job loss, discharge from the military or expulsion from school, is cruel, and not in keeping with American values.



C & D Canal Museum

Open to the Public

WIKIMEDIA COMMONS PHOTO BY: ACROTHERION

C & D CANAL MUSEUM

The Chesapeake and Delaware Canal is a 14-mile-long, 450-foot-wide and 40-foot-deep ship canal that connects the Delaware River with Chesapeake Bay. The C&D Canal Museum at Chesapeake City, Maryland is housed in the original canal pumphouse with a waterwheel and pumping engines, operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The museum illustrates the canal's history and operations. Current operations can be viewed through a television monitor which gives visitors up-to-the-minute locations on ships as they travel through the canal. Admission is free and the museum is open Monday–Friday year round, except for government holidays.

Child Watch by Marion Wright Edelman



Keeping Promises

"You promised." Children learn the value and power of those words very early on as they begin to develop a sense of morality and trust. A preschooler will show deep outrage when an adult promise isn't kept. The Continuing Resolution that ended the government shutdown relied on a series of uncertain promises about meeting children's needs and ensuring their futures. Congress did keep one very critical promise by finally passing a long overdue extension of funding for the *Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)*, giving new hope to families after 114 days of partisan politicking with the lives and health of the 8.9 million children who benefit from *CHIP*'s high-quality, child-appropriate affordable health coverage. This will help ensure stability for *CHIP*, and parents of children who are sick or suffering from disabilities who rely on this crucial program can now breathe a sigh of relief. However, Congress should continue to do the right thing for children and extend *CHIP* for an additional four years, which according to the Congressional Budget Office would help children while saving \$6 billion—an amount that could be used to fund other children's priorities. In the meantime millions of other children are still waiting on Congress's promises.

At the front of the line are the nearly 800,000 Dreamers, young undocumented immigrants brought to this country by their parents as children and granted protection under the *Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program (DACA)* which President Trump has set to end on March 5th. Enormous pressures from Congress's failure to act on *DACA* continue to grow. These young people, who in some cases now have their own children, have passed background checks, gone to school, met other requirements and contribute to their communities every day through work, study, and service but continue to be threatened with deportation and a return to countries they don't know at all. One young man who came to America at age five and didn't learn he was undocumented until he was 14 and tried

to apply for a work permit says, "It was very hard dealing with that because I always saw myself to be an American ... It killed me inside." He excelled in school and wants to become a lawyer or politician to help others and when *DACA* passed it was a dream come true. "I felt hap ... I felt like I was finally being accepted." Now, without a work permit and *DACA*'s other protections, his entire bright future would be dimmed in an instant: "For me personally, my voice would be taken away. My dreams would be shattered." The *DACA* protections must be preserved and extended to others along with a path to citizenship and without other provisions harmful to immigrants. Each day Congress fails to act an average of 122 additional *DACA* recipients lose protections and starting March 5th 1,000 Dreamers will lose protection every day.

Young children and their families who benefit from the *Maternal and Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting Program (MIECHV)* and *Community Health Center Program* also are still waiting for Congress to extend funding for their critical services. Pregnant women and children under five benefit from *MIECHV* in every state and ter-

ritory as the program helps improve maternal and newborn health, school readiness, and family economic self-sufficiency and helps reduce child abuse and neglect, crime, and domestic violence. One in 10 children use Community Health Centers (CHCs) for care and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has projected that loss of funding for CHCs would result in closing 2,800 health centers, eliminating more than 50,000 jobs, and more than 9 million patients losing access to care. This would even threaten the good news of stabilizing *CHIP*. For example, the Mississippi Primary Health Care Association, which oversees community health centers that serve nearly 300,000 Mississippians, reports one in every 14 children who receive *CHIP* in Mississippi gets their care in one of Mississippi's CHCs. By continuing funding for *CHIP*, but not for the Community Health Center Fund, parents have *CHIP* for their children but if CHCs close they will no longer have access to the exams, eyeglasses, pediatric dental services and other care their children need. Many centers already

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The Prince George's Post

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BUSINESS

Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty—One Word to Get Extra Benefits

by Russell Gloor, AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor

Dear Rusty: I keep receiving emails from different investor groups about “The one word that will get you an extra \$570 per month in social security”, which I could use. Of course they want you to buy all sorts of monthly newsletters in order to get their answer. Is there truly a way to get an extra \$570 per month and if so how do I go about getting it, or what is “the word”?

Signed: Curious

Dear Curious: I’m sure you’ve heard the old adage “If it sounds too good to be true - it is”. I have seen the solicitation you’re speaking of, and I’ve seen many other similar “come-on’s” which are always meant to lure you into buying something in return for revealing a secret way to get more from Social Security.

The reality is this: There isn’t any magical “one word” that will give you an extra benefit, unless that word is “delay”, meaning if you can delay applying for Social Security your benefit amount will be larger. And that’s because your benefit amount increases with each month you delay up until you reach age 70 when it will reach its maximum. Simply put, the more you delay the larger your benefit will be, and that’s certainly no secret. You’ll often see another tempting and mysterious phrase referred to as “FAASF” - an acronym for “file as a spouse first” - which refers to an option called the Restricted Application for Spousal Benefits Only. This option, which allows a person to file only for spousal benefits while allowing their own retirement benefit to grow, was eliminated by The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 for anyone born later than 1953. Those born in 1954 or after are automatically “deemed” to be filing for both their own retirement benefit and any spousal benefit they may be entitled to and cannot apply to collect only spousal benefits. But the ads promising to reveal a special “FAASF” option to you are trying to lure a smaller segment of people who may qualify as well as a majority who don’t to buy their product in return for revealing this “secret” option (which, of course, is no secret at all).

Social Security is a complex program with over 2700 rules and regulations, and there really isn’t any simple “one word” anyone can use to beat the system. My suggestion is to heed that old adage, and if you have any questions about whether or not you’re getting all of the Social Security benefits you’re entitled to, contact an independent Social Security advisory service (such as ours at The AMAC Foundation) which isn’t out to sell you anything. Our only goal is to be an independent free service to AMAC members and other senior citizens, with no strings attached.

The information presented in this article is intended for general information purposes only. The opinions and interpretations expressed are the viewpoints of the AMAC Foundation’s Social Security Advisory staff, trained and accredited under the National Social Security Advisors program of the National Social Security Association, LLC (NSSA). NSSA, the AMAC Foundation, and the Foundation’s Social Security Advisors are not affiliated with or endorsed by the United States Government, the Social Security Administration, or any other state government. Furthermore, the AMAC Foundation and its staff do not provide legal or accounting services. The Foundation welcomes questions from readers regarding Social Security issues. To submit a request, contact the Foundation at info@amacfoundation.org.

Giant Food from A1

Today, we celebrate Giant Food having its headquarters in Prince George’s County once again. We are proud that Giant Food is returning to a Prince George’s County that is as economically strong as we have ever been throughout our history. Prince George’s County has led the State of Maryland in job creation for the last 4 reporting periods. Last month,

the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics ranked the County 21st in the nation in terms of job growth—highest in the State of Maryland and in the National Capital Region.

We have quickly and intentionally become the economic engine of the State and Region and today’s news about the return and relocation of Giant Food is a testament that we are the “place to be” for businesses to grow, prosper, and expand.”

39th Street Gallery/Gateway Arts Center

Presents

Boldly Go

February 10–24, 2018

Artist Reception from 6–8 PM

3901 Rhode Island Ave., Brentwood MD



Please join the 39th Street Gallery and the University of Maryland’s Art Honors Program for a group exhibition featuring Grace DeWitt, Delany Green, Emmie Healey, Esther LaCharlotte, Erica Ryan, and HyoWon Sices.

The UMD Art Honors Program is designed for students who have demonstrated excellence in studio courses and achieved a high level of academic success.

Admission to the Honors Program is based on credit level (class standing), overall and major GPA, and most importantly, portfolio review.

This reception is free and open to the public. For more information please write or call John Paradiso, 202-487-8458. Email: artprograms@gatewaycdc.org

Maryland Joins Partnership Encouraging Young Women to Explore Careers in Cybersecurity

By PRESS OFFICER
Office of the Governor

ANNAPOLIS, MD—On January 24, 2018, Governor Larry Hogan today announced Maryland’s participation in an innovative cybersecurity training partnership with the SANS Institute, the largest provider of cybersecurity training and certification to professionals at governments and commercial institutions worldwide. This partnership will inspire the next generation of cybersecurity professionals and identify talented youth in Maryland. Open to female high school students, the *GirlsGoCyberStart* initiative encourages participants to explore their interests in cyber studies, learn core cybersecurity skills, and build confidence in problem-solving.

“Our administration is committed to ensuring Maryland’s young women have access to the resources they need to pursue exciting careers in STEM fields,” said Governor Hogan. “Initiatives like *GirlsGoCyberStart* engage our students and ensure that the next generation of Maryland women will be-

come innovators and leaders in the 21st century workforce.”

This announcement follows the governor’s ACCESS Initiative (Achievement Computer Science Collaborations for Employing Students Statewide), a comprehensive computer science education and workforce development plan, which was announced last year. Earlier this month, Lt. Governor Boyd Rutherford attended a meeting of the *Girls Who Code Club* and delivered remarks at the Society of Women Engineers, Baltimore-Washington Section Rube Goldberg Competition, an event where students compete to design a machine that uses the most complex process to complete a simple task.

GirlsGoCyberStart is a free online game open to all female students in grades 9 through 12, regardless of their prior knowledge or experience with cybersecurity and information technology. Playing alone or in teams, participants solve challenges to gain points and advance levels, earning prizes along the way. In addition to individual prizes, such as trips, gift certificates, and computers,

the three in-state schools with the most participants will win monetary prizes.

Last year, the SANS Institute launched *CyberStart*, a program that enabled participants to explore their aptitude for cybersecurity. Though thousands of students participated in the program, SANS discovered a notable deficit in the number of participating females: only 5 percent of the first-round participants were young women. The *GirlsGoCyberStart* initiative is the direct result of that discovery and will specifically engage female high school students.

“Women are underrepresented in the STEM fields,” said Labor Secretary Kelly M. Schulz. “We must empower our young women to take an active interest in STEM, and creative initiatives like *GirlsGoCyberStart* help us achieve that. Through innovative programs and outreach, we can reverse the statistics and grow female participation in cybersecurity and technology.”

The Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR) and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) will collaborate

to encourage young women to register and participate in this exciting opportunity.

“Creating a talented and diverse pipeline of female students with computer science expertise is critical to Maryland’s economic future,” said Dr. Karen Salmon, state superintendent of schools. “We offer career and technology education programs to help young women learn about cybersecurity, gain experience from internships, and prepare for rewarding careers vital to our national security.”

“The nation desperately needs more highly-skilled cyber professionals, and we have evidence that *CyberStart* improves the quality and preparation of people entering the cybersecurity field,” SANS Director of Research Alan Paller said. “Women are significantly underrepresented in the technical side of cybersecurity. By opening *CyberStart* to thousands of girls in high school, we hope to help the nation identify the next generation of talented people who will excel in this critical field.”

To learn more, please visit the website at <https://www.girlsgocyberstart.com/>.

February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month

By PRESS OFFICER
Family Justice Center

UPPER MARLBORO, MD (February 1, 2018)—In recognition of Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month, the Circuit Court for Prince George’s County is collaborating with various agencies to educate teens on the importance of healthy relationships.

“Statistics show that before the age of 18, approximately 7 percent of women and 4 percent of men have experienced rape, physical violence or stalking by an intimate partner,” states the Honorable Sheila R. Tillerson Adams, Administrative Judge of the Circuit Court for Prince George’s County. “By initiating and sustaining a healthy dialogue on teen dating, our youth will learn how to identify toxic

behavior in a relationship and seek guidance when necessary. Moreover, these platforms will highlight the positive practices of dating.”

On Thursday, February 8, 2018, the Circuit Court for Prince George’s County in partnership with the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (MNPPC), the Prince George’s County Department of Family Services and the Prince George’s County State’s Attorney’s Office, will host No Excuse for Dating Abuse: Breaking the Silence of Mouths Wide Shut. The event will be held at the Newton White Mansion, 2708 Enterprise Rd., Mitchellville, Md. from 6:30–9 p.m.

“Our goal for this event is to bring awareness to teen dating violence—an issue that affects

the development of many of our youth in Prince George’s County,” states Cherie Jones, Deputy Director of the Family Division, Juvenile Unit, at the Circuit Court for Prince George’s County. “As we keep our youth engaged and entertained with a fashion show, art and spoken word contests, a live band and a DJ, we will educate them about the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships and what to do if they find themselves, or someone else, in crisis.”

Additionally, the Prince George’s County Family Justice Center, an initiative of the Circuit Court, is launching Teen Empowerment Program (TEP), a series of teen workshops and group discussions that will tackle dating misconceptions and provide a healthy discourse

about teen dating violence. The innovative collaboration between the Prince George’s County Family Justice Center and An Earthly Embrace, a charitable organization who supports men, women and children impacted by domestic violence, will educate and support teens ages 13-19 who have experienced or been exposed to violence in their homes, in a relationship or have been victims of human trafficking.

“Sadly, teen dating violence has become a growing problem in communities across the United States,” says Denise C. McCain, Director of the Prince George’s County Family Justice Center. “With TEP, teenagers will become better aware of the subtle and overt signs of dating violence with the goal of identifying them and leaving a relationship that is harmful.”

Elections from A1

learned and perfected its techniques attacking democracy both internally and abroad. Such tools—drawn largely from a Soviet-era playbook, but updated with new technologies—include military incursions, cyberattacks, disinformation, support for fringe political groups, and the weaponization of energy resources, organized crime and corruption.

Putin first developed his techniques at home, against his own people. In Russia, he repressed independent civil society, journalists, and the political opposition, while manipulating cultural and religious institutions, the media, and fueling a corrupt kleptocracy to bolster his regime and increase his net worth. Putin’s increasing aggression abroad is directly related to his need to maintain power at home. As he looks to maintain power in Russia, he is likely to step up his attacks on democracies around the world.

Some European countries have shored up their democracies with a strategic, whole-of-government approach: publicly warning Moscow of consequences if it meddles; mobilizing various sectors of society to neutralize and push back

against Kremlin disinformation; and confronting Russian efforts to use corruption as a tool of influence. It is time for the United States to take similar actions.

The report includes more than 30 recommendations for the U.S. and its allies. Key recommendations include:

- **First**, Mr. Trump must demonstrate presidential leadership by declaring it is U.S. policy to deter all forms of Russian hybrid threats and begin to mobilize our government in defense. He should establish a high-level inter-agency fusion cell, modeled on the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), to coordinate all elements of U.S. policy and programming in response to the Kremlin’s malign influence operations.

- **Second**, the U.S. government should provide assistance, in concert with allies in Europe, to build democratic institutions within those European and Eurasian states most vulnerable to Russian government interference. As part of this effort, the President should convene an annual global summit on hybrid threats, modeled on the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL or the Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) summits. To reinforce these efforts, members in the U.S. Congress have a clear re-

sponsibility to show U.S. leadership on values by making democracy and human rights a central part of their agendas. They should conduct committee hearings and use other platforms and opportunities to publicly advance these issues.

- **Third**, the United States and our allies should expose and freeze Kremlin-linked dirty money. The U.S. Treasury Department should make public any intelligence related to Mr. Putin’s personal corruption and wealth stored abroad, and take steps with our European allies to cut off Mr. Putin and his inner circle from the international financial system.

- **Fourth**, the U.S. government should designate countries that employ malign influence operations to assault democracies as State Hybrid Threat Actors and subject them to a preemptive, escalatory sanctions regime that would be applied whenever the state uses asymmetric weapons like cyberattacks to interfere with a democratic election or disrupt a country’s critical infrastructure. The U.S. government should also produce yearly public reports that detail the Russian government’s malign influence operations in the U.S. and around the world.

- **Fifth**, the U.S. government and NATO should lead a coalition

of countries committed to mutual defense against cyberattacks, to include the establishment of rapid reaction teams to defend allies under attack. The U.S. government should also call a special meeting of the NATO heads of state to review the extent of Russian government-sponsored cyberattacks among member states and develop formal guidelines on how the Alliance will consider such attacks in the context of NATO’s Article 5 collective defense provision.

- **Finally**, U.S. and European governments should mandate that social media companies make public the sources of funding for political advertisements, along the same lines as TV channels and print media. Social media companies should conduct comprehensive audits on how their platforms may have been used by Kremlin-linked entities to influence elections occurring over the past several years, and should establish civil society advisory councils to provide input and warnings about emerging disinformation trends and government suppression. In addition, they should work with philanthropies, governments, and civil society to promote media literacy and reduce the presence of disinformation on their platforms.

OUT ON THE TOWN

ERIC D. SNIDER'S
IN THE DARK
Movie Review

Coco

Coco
Grade: B+
Rated PG, mild death
1 hr., 49 min

There are plenty of cartoons about holidays like Christmas and Halloween, but the geniuses at Pixar saw an unfulfilled need and came up with *Coco*, the first major animated film about Día de Muertos, or Day of the Dead, observed in Mexico and by Mexicans everywhere. Making a film to appeal to an untapped market is good business sense, but *Coco* also has that trademark Pixar sincerity, the sense that the storytellers really wanted to do justice to the subject and not just pander to an audience.

What they came up with is an earnest values-based story about honoring and remembering every branch of the family tree. Aside from being a lively adventure comedy, *Coco* is also an introduction to—and assiduously earnest portrayal of—some cultural traditions that many viewers haven't seen before. It is a noble thing to expand an audience's worldview, and director Lee Unkrich (*Toy Story 3*), who conceived the story with screenwriters Matthew Aldrich and Adrian Molina (who also co-directs), does it without sacrificing entertainment value.

Our junior Mexican hero is 12-year-old Miguel Rivera (voice of Anthony Gonzalez), a would-be musician whose dreams of stardom are hindered by one thing: his family hates music. Seems his great-great-grandfather was an ambitious troubadour who walked out on his wife and young daughter to pursue a music career, and the Riveras have been staunchly anti-music ever since. Miguel has to hide his guitar and practice in secret lest he offend his elders, the eldest of which is his great-grandmother Coco (Ana Ofelia Murguía), the little girl whose father left. Coco must be 90 now, near death, her



ROTTENTOMATOES
Despite his family's baffling generations-old ban on music, Miguel (voice of newcomer Anthony Gonzalez) dreams of becoming an accomplished musician like his idol, Ernesto de la Cruz (voice of Benjamin Bratt). Desperate to prove his talent, Miguel finds himself in the stunning and colorful Land of the Dead following a mysterious chain of events. Along the way, he meets charming trickster Hector (voice of Gael García Bernal), and together, they set off on an extraordinary journey to unlock the real story behind Miguel's family history.

memory fading. She still occasionally mentions "Papá," whom the family has never forgiven. She's the connection between the living and the dead, and it's fitting that the movie is named after her.

While preparing photos of departed loved ones for Día de Muertos, Miguel finds evidence that his infamous great-great-grandfather was none other than his idol, Ernesto de la Cruz (Benjamin Bratt), a legendary musician who died many years ago and is still beloved throughout Mexico. In his eagerness, Miguel does something that offends the spirits and puts him, a living boy, in the land of the dead, a sort of parallel dimension that overlaps with ours.

His dead ancestors are surprised to see him, and surprised that HE can see THEM. He can cross back to the realm of the living with the blessing of a rel-

ative—but his great-great-grandmother, Mamá Imelda (Alanna Ubach), will only grant it on the condition that he not pursue a career in music. Instead of taking the blessing and going back to the living world, Miguel sets out to find Ernesto de la Cruz here in the land of the dead. (What would a Pixar movie be without a journey and a quest?)

Miguel is soon joined by Hector (Gael García Bernal), a rascal and a scammer who's been forgotten by almost everyone in the living world. He wants to send a photo of himself back with Miguel to put on an "ofrenda," which will allow Hector to visit the living on Día de Muertos. (That's the deal, you see. The dead can come visit once a year, but only if someone puts their photo on a makeshift altar.)

The film has lots of fun with the dead, portrayed as skeletons (with eyeballs and clothing)

whose component parts can disassemble at will, especially if it produces a funny sight gag (like when a surprise causes a man's jaw to drop right off his skull). Having created a vivid world full of Día de Muertos details, Unkrich and his team run around in it like kids exploring, enjoying the scenery while they tell their story.

It's a twisting, surprising story, too, with unexpected complexity. We think we're in for a "follow your dreams" message, maybe some "power of music to transform the soul" ideas, but those themes, while present, are less vital than the old-fashioned reminder at the heart of the movie: "There's nothing more important than family." As usual, you get the feeling the storytellers truly believe it, and they infuse it with beautiful imagery and an appreciation for Mexican culture. Bien hecho, Pixar.

A Little This, A Little that

Light 'em up Now for Better Garden Results

By Melinda Myers

It's time to break out the seeds and potting mix to start your garden plants indoors. It's a great way to keep your green thumb in shape over winter. Plus, you'll save money, increase your variety of plants and jump start the growing season when you start seeds under LED grow lights.

Indoor growing conditions often offer limited light and that can mean tall leggy transplants with weak stems. You can greatly increase your success by investing in quality grow lights. Adding artificial light to your seed starting regime results in stout transplants with strong stems and deep green leaves.

Invest wisely when shopping for indoor plant lights. Fluorescent tubes used to be the standard because they provided a wide spectrum of light needed for plant growth and flowering, were relatively inexpensive and readily available. Unfortunately, they used significant amounts of electricity and needed to be replaced every few years. Then many gardeners shifted to full spectrum fluorescent grow lights. Many last longer than the older and larger fluorescent tubes, but new LED grow lights (gardeners.com) provide even better light intensity with much less energy.

If you've looked at LED lights in the past, you may have suffered sticker shock. Fortunately, the prices have dropped. And if you consider LED plant lights typically use half the energy of fluorescent tubes, provide consistent light quality and last up to five times longer, the long-term savings outweighs the initial investment. Plus, they're mercury-free and won't add contaminants to landfills.

When replacing fluorescent tubes with LED grow lights, look for compatibility. Some of the newer LED grow lights are compatible with existing T-5 light setups. You just replace the bulb, not your whole lighting system.

You will get the most out of your investment and grow better transplants with proper use. Move seedlings under lights as soon as they start breaking through the soil surface. Keep the lights about six inches above the top of seedlings. This means you'll need to raise the lights or lower the plants as the seedlings grow. Make your own light stand using adjustable supports to raise and lower lights as needed. Use a reflector above grow light tubes to direct the light downward toward the plants. Bounce light back onto seedlings by using reflective surfaces under and around the plants. Even easier, invest in a quality grow light stand like the SunLite® Garden.

Set the lights on a timer. Seedlings need about 14 to 16 hours of light. Plants do need a dark period, so running the lights longer wastes electricity and is not good for the plants. If you are using grow lights to supplement natural daylight, you may only need to run the lights a few hours a day. Monitor plant growth and increase the duration if plants appear leggy or pale.

Increased light along with proper watering, fertilizer and growing temperatures will ensure you have a bumper crop of transplants for your gardens and containers.

Melinda Myers has written over 20 gardening books, including *Small Space Gardening* and *the Midwest Gardener's Handbook*. She hosts *The Great Courses* How to Grow Anything: Food Gardening For Everyone DVD set and the nationally syndicated *Melinda's Garden Moment TV* and radio segments. Myers is also a columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* magazine and was commissioned by *Bonnie Plants* for her expertise to write this article. Myers' website is www.melindamyers.com.

County Council Supports Statewide Legislation to Increase Minimum Wage

State of Maryland "Fight for \$15" Could Increase Minimum Wage to \$15 by 2023

By PRESS OFFICER
Family Justice Center

UPPER MARLBORO, MD—The Prince George's County Council, during session on Tuesday, January 30, voted unanimously to adopt CR-5-2018, a resolution supporting statewide legislation to increase Maryland's minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2023.

Prince George's County Council Chair Dannielle Glaros says it is time for a statewide minimum wage increase.

"We have already established a 'regional minimum wage' with our neighbors in Montgomery County and the District of Co-

lumbia, but there is clearly more that should be done. A statewide \$15 minimum wage could level the playing field and reverse decades of growing pay inequality between lower-paid workers and the middle class. If we want to grow and improve as a County, we have to do what we can to improve the quality of life for working families."

In 2013, the County Council enacted CB-94-2013 as part of a collaborative effort with the District of Columbia and Montgomery County to establish a 'regional minimum wage,' gradually increasing the minimum wage in Prince George's County to \$11.50 by 2017. In 2014, the

Maryland General Assembly passed legislation to increase the state minimum wage rate to \$10.10 by 2018. The federal minimum wage, which has not increased since 2009, is currently \$7.25 an hour.

Under the legislation, the Council supports a statewide bill increasing the minimum wage to \$15 per hour by 2023, provided the wage is adjusted for inflation annually in accordance with the Consumer Price Index; the exemptions for youth and seasonal employees are reviewed; and an increase in the Developmental Disabilities Administration rate for wages and wages for tipped workers are addressed.

The Council also voted to authorize the Chair's signature on Council correspondence regarding the "State of Maryland Fight for \$15." The letter, addressed to Governor Larry Hogan, Senate President Mike Miller and Speaker of the House Michael Busch, expresses the Council's support for statewide legislation to increase the minimum wage to \$15 an hour. To review the Council letter, visit the website at https://princegeorgescountymd.legistar.com/Legislation-Detail.aspx?GUID=AADD1275-84DF-4D13-A163-1B6A6919858B&ID=3319791&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery.



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Calendar of Events

February 8 — February 14, 2018

"No Excuse for Dating Abuse" Self-Expression Teen Summit

Date and time: Thursday, February 8, 2018, 6:00 PM–9:00 PM
Description: Join the Department of Parks and Recreation in a national effort to protect and educate young people about dating violence. According to the Centers for Disease Control, unhealthy relationships can start early and last a lifetime — which is why prevention and early intervention is critical.

During this 'No Excuse for Dating Abuse' event, teens will have a panel discussion with courageous conversations confronting issues of dating violence head-on and calling on the community for support and action. Additionally, there will be a visual arts and poetry contest, interactive visual arts expressions, live band, refreshments, giveaways, and photo shoots. Bring a friend and don't miss this very important topic!

Cost: FREE

Ages: 11–21

Location: Newton White Mansion

2708 Enterprise Road, Mitchellville, MD

Contact: 301-249-7200; TTY 301-699-2544

Zumbathon

Date and time: Thursday, February 8, 2018, 6:00 PM–9:00 PM
Description: The hustle and bustle of life often leaves limited time to take care of yourself. If you were able to find an activity that can not only quickly address your physical health but your mental health as well, would you do it? Well, come join us for this Zumbathon and exercise your entire being!

Zumba helps improve participants self-confidence and motivation to exercise. When we love and value ourselves, it translates into relationships and how we allow others to treat us.

Cost: FREE

Ages: 11 and older

Location: Largo/Kettering/Perrywood Community Center

431 Watkins Park Drive, Upper Marlboro, M

Contact: 301-249-7200; TTY 301-699-2544

Discovery Cart: Logbooks—A Key to History

Date and time: Friday, February 9, 2018, 11:00 AM–2:00 PM
Description: Explore the history of African-American aviators through primary sources and documents. Learn about these courageous pilots and create your own pilot logbook! The Discovery Cart is for museum visitors of all ages!

Cost: FREE

Ages: All ages are welcome

Location: College Park Aviation Museum

1985 Corporal Frank Scott Drive, College Park, MD

Contact: 301-864-6029; TTY 301-699-2544

Expression of a People

Date and time: Sunday February 11, 2018, 1:00 PM–6:00 PM
Description: You're invited to a FREE! Black history celebration featuring musical performances, children's activities, workshops, and entertainment for the entire family. This year we welcome back some of our regular favorites, including our warm and engaging greeter and storyteller, Baba-C, and our always popular Culture Queen, Jessica Smith.

Activities include mask-making, face painting, a caricaturist, a make-and-take pottery workshop, and a S.T.E.A.M. workshop. Our stage performances are sure to please!

Cost: FREE

Ages: All ages are welcome

Location: Arts/Harmony Hall Regional Center

10701 Livingston Road, Fort Washington, MD

Contact: 301-203-6070; TTY 301-699-2544

The Enslaved and Hired Workers at Riversdale Tour

Date and time: Sunday February 11, 2018, 1:30 PM
Description: Dr. Leigh Ryan leads a guided tour of the Riversdale House Museum that focuses on the roles of workers, enslaved and free, that labored here in the early 19th century.

Cost: \$5/ages 18–59; \$4/60 and better; \$2/students 5–18

Ages: 5 and older

Location: Riversdale House Museum

4811 Riverdale Road, Riverdale Park, MD

Contact: 301-864-0420; TTY 301-699-2544

Seoul to Soul

Date and time: Sunday February 11, 2018, 4:00 PM
Description: Music, drumming, and dancing are universal languages, and in honor of the 2018 Winter Olympics, hosted by South Korea, the Coalition for African Americans in the Performing Arts (CAAPA) and the Korean American Cultural Arts Foundation have joined together to celebrate the commonalities and distinctions of these essential forms of expression. Fascinating, entertaining, and joyous, this international multi-cultural event is perfect for the whole family.

Cost: \$15 per person

Ages: All ages are welcome

Location: Publick Playhouse

5445 Landover Road, Cheverly, MD

Contact: 301-277-1710; TTY 301-699-2544

Seniors on the Go:

National Museum of African American History and Culture

Date and Time: Tuesday, February 13, 2018, 9:00 AM–4:00 PM
Description: The National Museum of African American History and Culture is a place where all Americans can learn about the richness and diversity of the African-American experience, and the accomplishments and contributions of African Americans that helped to shape this nation. To date, the Museum has collected more than 36,000 artifacts and showcases hundreds of inspirational men and women, both nationally and internationally.

Please wear comfortable walking shoes and bring money to purchase lunch.

Ages: 60 and better

Cost: Residents \$7; Non-residents \$10

Location: College Park Community Center

5051 Pierce Avenue, College Park, MD

Contact: 301-441-2647; TTY 301-699-2544

EARTH TALK ... Eco-Village Movement Flourishing Across the United States

Dear EarthTalk:

What are so-called "intentional communities"? And are there any in the U.S. that are sustainability-focused?

—Elissa McNeal,
Washington, D.C.

By definition, an "intentional community" (IC) is a planned residential community built around commonly held values usually foster social cohesion and shared responsibilities and resources. Some such communities are centered around religion, but others primarily seek to live more lightly on the planet. Collectives, co-housing communities, ecovillages, monasteries, survivalist retreats, ashrams and yes, even communes, are all forms of ICs that still exist today in the U.S. and elsewhere.

"Humanity thrives when people work together," says the Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC), a Missouri-based non-profit that promotes the development of ICs and the evolution of cooperative culture in the U.S. and Canada. "An 'Intentional Community' shows what happens when people take this premise to the next level—by living together in a village of their own making which reflects their shared values."

ICs that focus on sustainability as a key tenet are usually referred to as "eco-vil-

lages," a term first coined by Robert Gilman in *In Context Magazine* in 1991. What sets an eco-village apart from any old IC, according to Gilman, is the focus on "human scale, healthy and sustainable development, full-featured settlement, and the harmless integration of human activities into the natural world." Gilman added that eco-villages shouldn't take on more than 150 residents for a well-functioning social network.

These days, more than 140 different "eco-villages" are in operation across the U.S., according to the Scotland-based non-profit Global Ecovillage Network. Perhaps the granddaddy of modern day ICs is the EcoVillage at Ithaca (EVI) in Upstate New York. Founders took five years to build out the basics of their community before inviting residents to move in during 1996. Given the shared resources and focus on sustainability, an EVI resident's ecological footprint is about half the U.S. average.

"Homes in the village are built for maximum energy efficiency," says resident Clara Changxin Fang, who moved into EVI back in 2009. She adds that each of the community's clustered duplex housing units is situated for maximum solar gain and feature super insulated walls and high-efficiency triple pane windows facing south to take advantage of natural light and heat. A



CREDIT: M_DIESUS, FLICKRCC

More than 140 different intentional communities based around sustainability are in operation across the U.S., including Ecovillage at Ithaca (pictured here) which started in the early 1990

shared hot water system is designed to service eight homes at once with minimal heat loss. Development is clustered to maximize open space.

EVI is hardly the only established sustainability-oriented IC in the U.S. Some others include Arizona's Arcosanti, Oregon's Lost Valley, Vermont's Cobb Hill, Earthaven in North Carolina, Hawaii's Hedonisia, Altair in Pennsylvania, Dancing Rabbit in Missouri, Wisconsin's Dreamtime and Paz in Texas.

Meanwhile, for those looking to get in on the ground floor of sustainability-oriented communal living, many other new eco-villages are springing up coast-to-coast. Vermont's Headwaters, Mis-

souri's Dogtown, Texas' Wild-Craft, Michigan's Earthen Heart and Kansas' Creature Conduit Sanctuary are among dozens of new ICs rooted in sustainability that are actively seeking like-minded individuals to live together according to their values.

CONTACTS: FIC, ic.org; Global Ecovillage Network, ecovillage.org; EVI, ecovillage-ithaca.org.

EarthTalk® is written and edited by Roddy Scheer and Doug Moss and is a registered trademark of E - The Environmental Magazine (www.emagazine.com). Send questions to: earthtalk@emagazine.com.

Hoyer Hosts Roundtable Discussion with Federal Contractors

By PRESS OFFICER
Office of Steny Hoyer

LANHAM, MD—On January 29, 2018, Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-05) hosted a roundtable discussion with federal contractors and local business leaders from the Maryland Space Business Roundtable and the Goddard Contractors Association. The group discussed the negative

impact short-term government funding bills have on the ability of contractors to efficiently plan and serve the government.

"The inability of Republicans in Congress to govern responsibly has real-life consequences for thousands of Marylanders," said Congressman Hoyer. "By funding the government for short durations, Congressional leaders have made it exceedingly difficult for federal contractors to

make long-term plans, such as hiring employees, and in turn, do business with the federal government. I appreciated meeting with local business leaders in the space industry today to hear their concerns and frustrations."

"Congress must do better," continued Congressman Hoyer. "Federal contractors work in all areas of government, and provide services and support to Americans across the nation. I

implore Republicans in Congress to work with Democrats to responsibly fund the government, so that federal contractors can effectively serve their government. I want to thank the hardworking individuals who participated in today's important discussion. I will continue to work with my colleagues to responsibly fund our government, and prevent uncertainty in our workforce."

Bill-92 from A1

The *Public School Facilities Act of 2004* was a significant step in the right direction with the intent to provide \$2 billion of funding for school construction by FY 2013, an average of \$250 million annually for eight years. We applaud the State for achieving the \$2 billion target ahead of schedule. However, due to various factors (aging facilities, rising construction costs, and so forth), significantly more State funding is needed across Maryland.

For example, school construction costs range from \$42,800 per student for a middle school to \$56,100 for a high school, ac-

cording to the Interagency Committee on School Construction and the Department of Legislative Services. The \$250 million annual target will not be enough in the future to adequately address the statewide school system capital needs.

Across the State of Maryland, school systems are facing a multi-billion DOLLAR construction and renovation challenge over the next two decades. In Prince George's County alone, our school system has identified approximately \$8.5 billion in school facility capital needs over the next 20 years, an average of \$400 million annually. Between FY 2009 and FY 2018, the State

has provided approximately \$397 million to the County school system. If the County would receive an average of \$40 million annually over the next twenty years from the State, it would represent less than 10% of the school system's \$8.5 billion in capital needs.



School systems and local governments need to be provided with flexibility, and innovative methods to successfully meet the school facility challenges today and in the future.

Alternative approaches should be authorized that provide school systems and local governments the ability to construct and/or renovate school facilities

in the most efficient, cost effective manner possible in order to provide students a positive learning environment. SB 92 expands the types of alternative financing methods that could allow more schools to be constructed and/or renovated across Maryland, and with lower costs per student. It also contains provisions TO ensure that core principles remain, such as the use of minority business enterprises (MBE) and prevailing wages.

We applaud the efforts by Senator Rosapepe to assist school systems and local governments in meeting the monumental capital challenges that face us today and the future.





DONT GREASE YOUR DRAIN

If cooking oil, kitchen grease or fat from poultry and meat is washed down the drain, it can collect in pipes and cause sewer backups, basement flooding or sewage spills to the environment. Here are a few ways to properly dispose of your grease.

- 1 Cool down cooking oil, grease and fat and carefully pour into a sturdy, sealable container;
- 2 Use a paper towel to wipe out greasy pots and pans; put the paper towels in with the garbage;
- 3 Recycle large quantities of cooking oil and grease at the Prince George's County Household Hazardous Waste Acceptance Facility; 11611 White House Road, Upper Marlboro. The Facility is open Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays, 8 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. and is FREE for County residents.

second NATURE