



February 21, 2021

SESSION DAY OF NOTE

Today marks the 40th day of the 2021 legislative session's 90-day calendar. On Friday, "Green Bag" appointments were submitted by the Office of the Governor. The Appointments Office aids the Governor's selection of individuals for appointed positions with state agencies and departments as well as appointments to boards and commissions.

The State of Maryland has over 500 boards and commissions. A total 154 appointments were submitted to the Maryland State Senate. The Secretary of Appointments virtually presented the Senate President with the names of the "Green Bag" nominees.

CRISIS HOTLINE NUMBER ON STUDENT ID CARDS; AUDIT AUTHORITY EXPANSION UNDER CONSIDERATION

On Wednesday in House Appropriations Committee a discussion took place concerning the addition of a crisis hotline number to the back of student identification cards. **House Bill 466** requires each institution of higher education to provide the telephone number of Maryland's Helpline on student identification cards.

Overall, the Maryland Suicide Prevention Program aims to prevent suicide by collaborating with the Governor's Commission on Suicide Prevention as well as various state departments, community agencies, providers, and members to increase awareness of suicide and improve preparedness to identify individuals at-risk, intervene, and provide support to promote healing and improved quality of life.

Suicide is reported as the second leading cause of death among college students, but it is preventable. The majority of college students who experience suicidal ideation also experience some form of mental health concern or distress, most commonly depression. The most effective way to prevent suicide is to identify the warning signs, intervene as appropriate, and refer to campus resources. The USM asked that the bill be amended to give USM presidents the discretion to decide which crisis number appears on student identification cards.

The committee also deliberated **House Bill 756**. The bill states that the Office of Legislative Audits (OLA) shall have access to records/information, including those protected by law. University System of Maryland (USM) institutions have gifts, grants and contracts that would be ineligible to obtain if confidentiality is not ensured. USM institutions also hold information that is protected under HIPPA and FERPA laws. House Bill 756 simply places USM employees in a conflicted position as they would not be able to comply with conflicting laws. Additionally, the bill does not provide any guidance ethical or otherwise as to OLA responsibility in requesting such information.

The second concern pertains to the bill's language that OLA have the power to subpoena. The language does not provide any guidelines or standards that OLA must follow to ensure that this power is used judiciously and sparingly. Prosecuting arms such as the OAG and State Prosecutors currently serve this function, and they must follow professional and legal standards to issue subpoenas. Granting an organization the right to subpoena without careful oversight may itself open the door to challenges of intention and scope.

Lastly, the bill's language that agencies report any instance of possible criminal or unethical conduct is redundant and needs clearer ethical standards. Agencies are already required to report criminal activity to the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) and the Governor's Office. Violations of Maryland's State Ethics laws are required to be reported to Maryland's State Ethics Commission. This information is also provided to OLA upon their request when they are conducting their fiscal compliance audits.

The USM is looking forward to working with the sponsors to clarify the roles and responsibilities to monitor for fraud, waste or abuse.

UPCOMING BILL HEARINGS

Highlighted items are those in the next week or two.

HB0534

Public Health - Healthy Maryland Program – Establishment

Delegate Acevero

In the House - Hearing 3/11 at 1:30 p.m.

Health and Government Operations

HB0723

Public Institutions of Higher Education – Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Individuals – Academic and Employment Opportunities

Delegate Ivey

In the House - Hearing 2/24 at 1:30 p.m. (Appropriations)

Appropriations

HB0803 (SB0835)

Facilitating University Transformations by Unifying Reductions in Emissions (FUTURE) Act

Delegate Solomon

In the House - Hearing 2/25 at 1:30 p.m.

Appropriations

HB1124 (SB0040)

Higher Education - Richard W. Collins III Leadership with Honor Scholarship - Bowie State

Delegate Harrison

In the House - Hearing 2/25 at 1:30 p.m.

Appropriations

SB0405 (HB0466)

Higher Education - Student Identification Cards - Required Information

Senator Augustine

In the Senate - Hearing 2/25 at 11:00 a.m.

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

SB0437 (HB0359)

Maryland Longitudinal Data System - Student Data - Pregnant and Parenting Students

Senator Washington

In the Senate - Hearing 2/25 at 11:00 a.m.

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

SB0439 (HB0125)

Public Institutions of Higher Education - Student Athletes (Jordan McNair Safe and Fair Play Act)

Senator Ready

In the Senate - Hearing 2/25 at 11:00 a.m.

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

SB0526 (HB1268)

Legal Education Success Collaborative – Established

Senator McCray

In the Senate - Hearing 2/25 at 11:00 a.m. (Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Budget and Taxation

SB0554 (HB0246)

Higher Education - Returned Peace Corps Volunteers - In-State Tuition

Senator Young

In the Senate - Hearing 3/09 at 1:00 p.m.

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

SB0584 (HB0046)

Education - Student Horizon Database and Scorecard

Senator Gallion

In the Senate - Hearing 2/25 at 11:00 a.m.

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

SB0767 (HB0891)

**Higher Education - Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program – Established
Senator Washington**

In the Senate - Hearing 3/09 at 1:00 p.m.

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

SB0800 (HB1337)

Inmate Training and Job Act of 2021

Senator Patterson

In the Senate - Hearing 3/09 at 1:00 p.m.

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

SB0835 (HB0803)

Facilitating University Transformations by Unifying Reductions in Emissions (FUTURE) Act

Senator Rosapepe

In the Senate - Hearing 3/09 at 1:00 p.m.

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

SB0845 (HB0905)

Education – Workforce Development Sequence Scholarships – Eligibility

Senator Benson

In the Senate - Hearing 3/09 at 1:00 p.m.

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

SB0858

Higher Education – Coppin State University – Funding

Senator Hayes

In the Senate - Hearing 3/03 at 1:00 p.m.

Budget and Taxation

SB0886 (HB0460)

Transfer with Success Act

Senator Elfreth

In the Senate - Hearing 2/25 at 11:00 a.m.

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

SB0895

University System of Maryland - Student Fees - Review and Retention

Senator Rosapepe

In the Senate - Hearing 3/09 at 1:00 p.m.

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

SB0927

Institutions of Higher Education - Prohibition Against Incentive Payments - Foreign Student Exemption

Senator Pinsky

In the Senate - First Reading Senate Rules
Rules