

Senator Rob Garagiola is the Senate Deputy Majority Leader and serves on the Finance Committee, where he is Chairman of the Health Subcommittee. In addition, he is the Senate Chair of two Joint Committees: Health Care Delivery and Financing; and Children, Youth and Families. He has been recognized by many organizations and has received the following awards: 2007 American Cancer Society's Maryland Leadership Award, 2006 Maryland Clean Energy Legislative Partner, 2006 MD FOP Senate Legislator of the Year, 2005 Champion for Children, and 2004 Solar Energy Champion. Senator Garagiola has also served as a sergeant and airborne soldier in the U.S. Army Reserve and was the former Senate Chair of the Veterans Caucus. He is currently a business attorney and his wife, Cindy, is a public school teacher. They have three children.

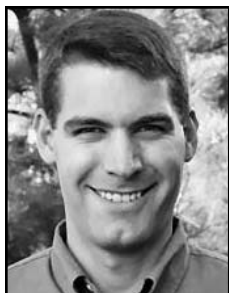
Delegate Brian J. Feldman, both an Attorney and CPA, serves on the House Economic Matters Committee and the Joint Committee on Access to Mental Health Services. Prior to being elected in 2002, Delegate Feldman was a senior trial attorney for the U.S. Department of Justice where he was a three-time recipient of the Justice Department's Outstanding Attorney Award. He currently works as an attorney in private practice. He and his wife have two children. In 2005, Delegate Feldman was named by the Biotechnology Industry Organization as its "State Legislator of the Year Award" for the entire country.

Delegate Kathleen M. Dumais serves on the Judiciary Committee and is Chair of its Family Law Subcommittee. She now also serves as the House Parliamentarian. A graduate of the University of MD School of law, her practice concentrates in family law with a firm in Bethesda. Delegate Dumais is an active member and past officer of both the Montgomery County Bar Association and the Montgomery County Women's Bar Association. She has been named one of Maryland's Top 100 Women and has received professional awards from the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence, the Montgomery Bar Association, and the Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MCASA). She recently received the "Democratic Diva" award from the Women's Caucus of the Young Democrats of Maryland.

Delegate Craig Rice is a lifelong resident of Montgomery County, Maryland. He resides in Germantown, Maryland with his wife Tia and two daughters, 5-year Anaiya and 1-year old, Caelyn. He is active in many community organizations including the Germantown Alliance, NAACP, and the Montgomery County Young Democrats. He is a graduate of the University of Maryland and when not in session works with the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico as their commercial representative in the US. He is the first African American to represent District 15.

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Rob Garagiola



Delegate
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Delegate
Kathleen M. Dumais



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Senator
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Delegate
Kathleen M. Dumais



Delegate
Craig Rice

The General Assembly of Maryland, at its 422nd session from January to April 2007, considered nearly 2,500 bills, of which 652 bills became law; most take effect October 1, 2007.

Successful 2007 initiatives strengthen the laws related to children by increasing the maximum penalty for possession of child pornography, passing a Jessica's law, and making sexual abuse of a minor under age 13 a crime of violence. Human trafficking now carries stiff penalties for violators.

Protection against identity theft was enhanced by establishing procedures for security freezes on credit reports and by requiring businesses to disclose security breaches. Other new law requires automatic expungement of all police records for anyone arrested or confined but not charged, beginning October 1, 2007.

Efforts to protect the State's environmental integrity are ongoing. This session, the legislature passed the Clean Cars Act, based on the California model, which will lower vehicle emissions beginning with the 2011 model year. Other measures support the use of biodiesel and other renewable alternative fuels and alternative energy sources such as solar energy and wind.

A health-related initiative bans indoor smoking statewide in public places and in work places not open to the public to protect those employees. Increased funding for the State's Stem Cell Research Fund supports both public and private research.

In 2008, voters will decide whether the Maryland Constitution should be amended to provide for early voting. The General Assembly also agreed, if money is available, to provide voter-verifiable paper trails beginning in 2010.

The General Assembly adopted a \$30 billion budget for fiscal 2008 that is just 3.5% over fiscal 2007. At the end of the fiscal year, the budget allows for an estimated general fund balance of \$67.1 million and reserves of \$673.7 million or 5% of general fund revenue in the State's Rainy Day Fund. Maryland remains one of the few states in the nation with an AAA bond rating from all major rating services.

Although the budget is balanced and there are large cash reserves, the long-range economic news for the State remains uncertain. The structural gap between ongoing revenues and expenditures is estimated to be \$933 million in fiscal 2008. In the coming months, members of the General Assembly will be actively involved in working toward ways to close the gap.

The 2007 General Assembly approved a capital program totaling \$3.3 billion, with money for transportation, public school

construction, colleges and universities, hospitals, correctional facilities, environmental programs, and health and social services facilities.

TAX CREDITS AND BENEFITS

Publicly Sponsored Business Incubators: Local governments may provide a local property tax credit for property that is used as a "business incubator", if certain criteria are met including participation by the State or other government entity, a public higher education institution, or a tax-exempt organization.

BUSINESS, AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Life Science and Technology: By 2006, an estimated 360 private bioscience companies were located in Maryland, employing approximately 23,200 people. A new Life Sciences Advisory Board will work with the State to maintain a competitive environment and encourage research and development in other life sciences such as pharmaceuticals, biomedical technologies, and food and environmental sciences.

Security Freezes: Consumers will be able to freeze their credit reports, and must be notified in writing about what information was released and given the recipient's contact information within five business days.

Security Breaches: A business must protect an individual's personal information against unauthorized access and notify a consumer if personal information has been acquired through a security system breach.

CRIMES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Jessica's Law: By passing Jessica's Law, named after the young Florida girl murdered by a convicted child sex offender, the legislature made 25-year mandatory minimum sentences nonparolable, when the victim is under age 13, for a person at least 18 years old convicted of first-degree rape or a first-degree sexual offense.

Crimes of Violence: The General Assembly added the crime of sexual abuse of a minor under 13 years of age by an adult and the crime of continuing course of conduct with a child to the list of crimes of violence for which enhanced penalties, including mandatory minimum sentences and ineligibility for parole, are applied to repeat offenders.

Human Trafficking, Extortion, and Involuntary Servitude: Maryland joins 25 other states that have enacted laws prohibiting human trafficking, a modern form of slavery and a lucrative criminal enterprise in today's global economy.

Identity Theft: Pretexting, a form of identity theft, occurs when a person falsely claims to be someone else in order to obtain confidential information. This crime will carry a maximum penalty of 18 months in prison and/or a \$5,000 fine.

COURTS AND CIVIL PROCEEDINGS

Child Support – Health Insurance Coverage: Alteration of the treatment of health insurance under the child support guidelines provides that, instead of deducting the cost of insurance from the income of the parent who provides the coverage, the cost is added to the basic child support obligation and divided by the parents in proportion to their incomes. As a result, the cost of health insurance is apportioned more equitably, which is consistent with the cost sharing of other expenses under the guidelines.

Child Support Payment Incentive Program: The goal of this new statewide program is to encourage payment of child support arrearages in cases in which the right to child support has been assigned to the State in exchange for Temporary Cash Assistance. A delinquent parent who enters into an agreement with the State's Child Support Enforcement Administration will receive in exchange reductions in the amount of arrearages, often accumulated in significant amounts during periods of unemployment or incarceration, which then may negatively impact the ability to collect current child support.

EDUCATION

State Education Aid – Increases: As the final year of the phase-in for the Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act of 2002, fiscal 2008 will see the largest increase yet. The aid will increase to nearly \$5.2 billion, an increase of 15.4% over 2007. In total, education aid will increase by \$2.2 billion from fiscal 2002 to 2008, reflecting an average annual rate of 10.2%.

School Construction Funding: The capital budget contains \$401.8 million for public school construction, which is the highest level of funding since the program began in 1971.

Aging Schools and Relocatable Classrooms: In fiscal 2008, through the State's aging schools program, a total of \$12.5 million will be distributed to Maryland counties and Baltimore City. State funding for renovations and demolitions of relocatable classrooms also increased.

Colleges and Universities: Every segment of higher education receives a general fund increase in the fiscal 2008 budget, including money to defray expenses associated with a 2% cost-of-living allowance for State employees. The University System of Maryland will receive a total general fund increase of \$80 million, or 8.5%, including \$15.4 million to offset the loss of tuition revenue from the second-year freeze on undergraduate resident tuition rates.

Community Colleges: For fiscal 2008, the budget fully funds community colleges, with increases of \$31.8 million over fiscal 2007.

Higher Education Tuition Freeze: In a continuing effort to address concerns about college affordability, the General Assembly extended the tuition freeze for the second consecutive year for resident undergraduate students attending the University System of Maryland institutions and Morgan State University. An additional \$16.2 million covers the loss of tuition revenue.

ELECTIONS

Early Voting: Legislation, if approved by the voters at the 2008 general election, would amend the Maryland Constitution to

give the General Assembly the power to provide by law for early voting.

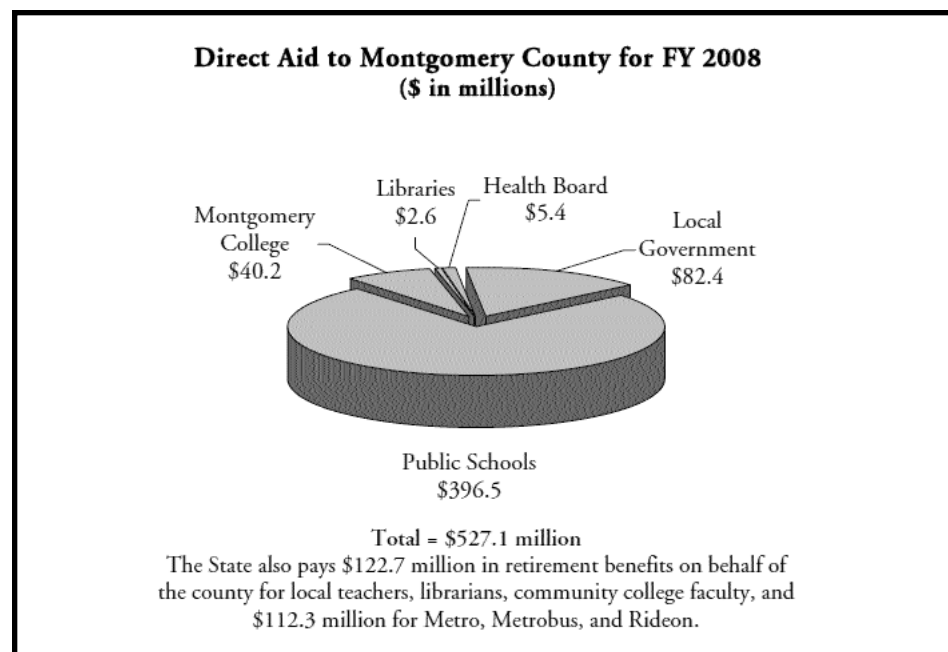
Voter-verifiable Paper Records: This session the General Assembly agreed, contingent on sufficient funding, to provide voter-verifiable paper records beginning January 1, 2010. A voting system must meet various requirements with respect to access for voters with disabilities.

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Clean Cars: The more than 135 million miles that Marylanders drive each day contributes up to 40% of the State's air pollution problems. Under the Clean Cars Act, Maryland joins Pennsylvania and nine other states in creating a low-emission vehicle program based on the California model, beginning with the 2011 model year.

Alternative Energy Sources: Successful bills create incentives to encourage the development of electricity energy generating facilities powered by wind and also require the Public Service Commission to take steps to improve the State's use of solar energy by requiring electricity suppliers to increase their use of solar energy over time.

Renewable Alternative Fuels: A task force will study ways to integrate biodiesel and other renewable fuels into the current mix of motor fuels available to consumers and evaluate the economic and environmental impact of the integration. Additionally, by fiscal 2009, at least half of the State's diesel-powered heavy equipment and heating equipment must use, if available, a fuel blend that is at least 5% biodiesel.



Stormwater Management: Stormwater management has been a part of Maryland law since the early 1980s. New provisions related to the use of environmental site design strengthen management practices to the maximum extent practicable.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Medicaid and Maryland Children's Health Program (MCHP) Increases: Funding increased by 6.4%, bringing the total to \$4.9 billion. About 650,000 people are expected to enroll in fiscal 2008, an increase of 15,000 over projected fiscal 2007 levels. There are rate enhancements for provider groups including physicians and nursing homes.

Smoking Ban: Maryland follows 11 other states in passing a comprehensive, statewide smoke-free law. Beginning February 1, 2008, smoking is prohibited in indoor places open to the public and indoor places of employment. Hardship waivers may be issued by local health departments based on State regulations, but all waivers terminate as of January 31, 2011.

Health Care Access and Reimbursement: A task force will look at issues such as reimbursement rates paid to physicians and health care providers, uncompensated care, and health care provider shortages.

Continuation of Coverage for Child Dependents: Insurers, nonprofit health service plans, and HMOs must allow a child dependent to remain on an insured's plan until age 25. Generally, the age is 19, or age 23 if a full-time student. However, after reaching the limiting age of the policy, many young adults lose access to insurance.

Access to Coverage for Domestic Partners: Group health insurance policies and contracts that allow family coverage must provide the same benefits and eligibility guidelines that apply to other covered dependents for a domestic partner or the child dependent of a domestic partner of the insured.

Relationship between Health Insurance Carriers and Health Care Providers: Several passed measures address the perceived imbalance in negotiating contracts between carriers and providers. One measure benefits both carriers and providers by making changes in the process by which the credentials of providers are vetted and reported.

Small Group Insurance: Small employers may get a discount for purchase of

additional benefits for their employees such as dental, disability, or vision insurance or other special coverage. They may also offer a limited benefit plan to seasonal, temporary, and part-time workers.

Funding - Community-based Services for Children: The fiscal 2008 budget includes \$16.5 million for community-based services for children with mental or developmental disabilities.

Programs for Seniors: A new State commission will encourage local communities to enhance aging-in-place services, personal independence, and civic and social engagement of seniors.

STATE GOVERNMENT

State Assistance to Veterans: A task force, with an extended deadline of 2009, is to report on the status of services for veterans, the feasibility of establishing new services, and the potential impact of an increased number of veterans returning from military service.

Procurement - Living Wage: Maryland is the first state in the nation to require certain contractors to pay a living wage to employees who perform work under State contracts. For fiscal 2008, the living wage is set at \$11.30 per hour for Montgomery County and other urban areas. The rural county rate is \$8.50.

ACTIONS OF LOCAL INTEREST MONTGOMERY COUNTY – DISTRICT 15

The State budget continues to provide record support for local programs and services in fiscal 2008. Mandatory State aid programs are fully funded and public school construction projects will once again receive a significant influx of new State funds. State aid to Montgomery County will total \$649.8 million in fiscal 2008.

Education: State funding for public schools remains a high priority. Over the last five years, State funding for public schools in Montgomery County has increased by \$160.8 million. In fiscal 2008, County public schools will receive \$396.5 million for operations and \$52.3 million for school construction. The County library system will receive a total of \$2.6 million. State funding for Montgomery College includes \$40.2 million for operations.

Public Safety: Police protection, fire, and rescue aid will receive \$16.5 million.

Social Services: The State budget includes \$117.0 million for programs focused on health, mental health, developmental disabilities, alcohol and drug abuse treatment, prevention and disease control, and child welfare services. Capital grants will be provided for community service organizations, including Community Services for Autistic Adults and Children, Community Support Services, and the Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County.

Quality of Life: Local transportation and land preservation grants remain fully funded. Local highway grants will total \$46.4 million and local Program Open Space grants will total \$16.7 million. There is \$112.3 million in operating assistance for Metro, Metrobus, and Ride On. Additional funds will aid parks and playgrounds, waterway improvement projects, and water quality projects.

Local Programs: Programs receiving State aid include projects at the Warren Historical Site; the Woodstock Equestrian Park; the Katherine Thomas High School, a non-public school in Rockville serving students with moderate to severe learning disabilities; and the MacDonald Knolls Center, which provides services to developmentally disabled adults and children.

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