

Maryland General Assembly Session 2023: What to Expect & Where You Fit In



Maryland's General Assembly

- Meets annually for 90 days
 - January 11 through April 10, 2023
 - Must pass a balanced budget (FY 24)
- 47 Legislative Districts
 - Takoma Park = District 20
 - Senator Will Smith
 - Delegates Lorig Charkoudian, David Moon, Jheanelle Wilkins

2023 General Assembly

- Will have 8 new Senators (Dems +2) and 39 new Delegates (Dems +4)
- Senate President Bill Ferguson & House Speaker Adrienne Jones
- We will not know committee assignments until closer to the start of Session

How a Bill Becomes Law

- Each bill that is introduced must be sponsored by a legislator
- Ideas for bills can come from anyone including you; you just need to find the right sponsor
- There are an average of 2,500 bills introduced each year – About 600 bills are passed each year
- To become a law, each bill must:
 - Pass 3 readings on each chamber (House of Delegates and Senate)
 - Be identical to one another on the final vote by each chamber
 - Not be vetoed by the governor

Pressure Points

- Every bill introduced that meets deadlines gets a hearing in a standing committee
 - 4 in the Senate & 6 in the House
 - D20 has some power – Sen. Smith is Chair of JPR; Del. Moon is Vice Chair of JUD; Del. Wilkins is House Parliamentarian & will be President of the Legislative Black Caucus; Del. Charkoudian is Chair of Unemployment Insurance Subcommittee of ECM
- Hearings
 - Public can testify – written &/or oral
 - Takoma Park's effectiveness is:
 - Concrete examples where issues impact municipalities & residents
 - Reminding legislators where municipal authority is needed
 - Adding to the voices supporting/opposing a particular issue

The Budget Process

- The FY 2024 budget will largely reflect Governor Hogan's priorities
- Governor-Elect Moore will have a small impact on the budget when it's introduced on January 20
- This is the first year the General Assembly will have increased power over the budget
 - Can increase line items – must take from another part of the budget
 - Cannot increase the overall state budget
 - Governor will have line-item veto power
 - General Assembly can override
- Public Policy Partners hosting a New Budget Process Training on December 13

Takoma Park City Council Priorities

- Capital project funding & bond opportunities
 - Takoma Park Maryland Library
- Fiscally sustainable government
 - New revenue streams such as opioid settlement money, cannabis revenue, MML priorities
- Transportation & infrastructure investment
 - Pedestrian safety
- Housing issues
 - Just cause eviction, affordable housing development, emergency rental assistance, homeownership assistance
- Climate Change
 - Meaningful and achievable goals for municipalities

MD Municipal League 2023 Priorities

- In September the MML Board of Directors unanimously voted to adopt one priority for the 2023 legislative session:
 - To ensure municipalities have the option of creating their own Police Accountability Boards and Charging Committees
- MML also has two strategic initiatives:
 - Expanding Municipal Revenues Sources
 - Focus on communication with the public, specifically the intersections of transparency, notifications, and privacy

Questions & Discussion

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