



The 2022 General Assembly session convened on Wednesday, January 12, 2022. The Governor presented his capital and operating budgets shortly thereafter. The following items have been included in the Governor’s budget.

FY23 CAPITAL BUDGET REQUESTS:

- **A \$600,000 grant to support the Bender JCC’s construction of an outdoor accessible Inclusive Sportscomplex.** The Bender JCC runs the largest non-sectarian special needs camp in the State of Maryland. This new facility will have smooth contiguous surfacing for those in need of mobility assistance, open and gradual ramp entries, better shade for campers and staff who are medically fragile, and an optimal outdoor program space for children with a range of disabilities. The total estimated budget of this project is \$800,000 dollars. The Bender JCC has secured a \$60,000 grant and requested \$140,000 from the Foundation for Jewish Camp to complement the State’s investment.
- **The first half (\$600,000) of a two-year \$1.2 million grant to upgrade Revitz House infrastructure.** Revitz House, an affiliate of the Hebrew Home of Greater Washington/Charles E. Smith Life Communities (CESLC), is a 250-unit non-sectarian, affordable independent living community. While primarily serving older adults, it is also home to disabled adults and extremely low-income seniors. Over the last 45 years, the piping system has deteriorated and created leaks which damage public spaces and individual apartments. Pipe relining is a cost-effective method of repair instead of full replacement. The second half (\$600,000) of the funding will be included in the FY2024 budget. CESLC is also seeking funding from Montgomery County, donors, and foundations.

ACTION: Please urge legislators to support funds allocated in the capital budget for these important projects.

FY23 OPERATING BUDGET REQUESTS:

- **A \$5 million grant for the “Protecting Against Hate Crimes” (PAHC) program through the Governor’s Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim**

Services. The importance of this grant cannot be underestimated as our houses of worship are increasingly threatened and vandalized and need security enhancements to protect themselves from hate crimes. Jews only make up 2% of the US population, but 60% of religious based hate crimes target Jewish people and their institutions. (A \$2 million increase from last year).

- **\$2 million for the “Hate Crimes Grant” (HCG) through the Maryland Center for School Safety (MCSS).** This program provides grants to schools and childcare centers, determined to be at risk of hate crimes or attacks, for security-related personnel, technology, and facility upgrades. (Level funded).
- **A \$350,000 grant for the Jewish Social Services Agency (JSSA) to help meet the acute and growing needs of Holocaust survivors.** In FY2021, the Maryland Department of Aging’s Holocaust Survivor Program grant enabled JSSA to provide in-home personal care and housekeeping services, escorted transportation to medical appointments, home delivered meals, financial assistance for acute life needs, care management, as well as access to diverse social programs designed to ameliorate loneliness and connect participants to support and resources. JSSA has been able to ensure that 443 frail, primarily low-income survivors could safely age in place. (Level funded).
- **A \$225,000 grant for JSSA to help maintain their Coming-of-Age Program in Montgomery County.** In partnership with other community-based organizations, JSSA offers comprehensive programming and services including: transportation; care management; mental health services; and, recreational and socialization programs, allowing seniors in Montgomery county to avoid isolation, make new friends, and age in place. Annually, close to 500 older adults have benefitted from the programming that Coming of Age provides. (Level funded).
- **A \$75,000 grant for ElderSAFE™ Center of the Hebrew Home of Greater Washington/Charles E. Smith Life Communities to provide general operating support.** ElderSAFE Center provides temporary shelter, trauma-informed care, and community referrals to vulnerable adults, age 60 years and older, who are survivors of abuse (physical, sexual, psychological, and financial) and/or neglect. It serves older adults from all faiths and backgrounds and admits eligible clients to shelter without regard to income or ability to pay. (Level funded).
- **A \$300,000 grant for the Maryland Israel Development Center (MIDC) to promote bilateral trade and economic development between Maryland and Israel.** The MIDC is a “public private partnership” of the Maryland Department of Commerce, Israel’s Ministry of Economy and Trade, and The Associated Jewish Federation of Baltimore. (Level funded).

ACTION: Please urge legislators to support funds allocated in the operating budget for these important programs/items.

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES:

SB387/HB425 – Public Safety – Untraceable Firearms (Ghost Guns):

This bill alters a definition of "firearm" to include an unfinished frame or receiver (a so-called ghost gun); and prohibits a person from purchasing, receiving, selling, offering to sell, or transferring a "ghost gun", or possessing a firearm on or by Jan.1, 2023, unless it has been imprinted with a serial number by the manufacturer. The bill would not apply to antique firearms or guns made before 1968. A violation would be a misdemeanor with a sentence of up to three years in prison and a fine of up to \$10,000. Ghost guns are assembled from parts and sold in kits on the internet without background checks. The recent shooting at Magruder High School in Derwood involved a ghost gun. Montgomery County reportedly has seen its ghost gun numbers increase fivefold in two years. The proliferation of these guns is making communities unsafe and has become a weapon of choice by many gun traffickers.

Senate Sponsors: The President (By Request- Office of the Attorney General) & Senator Lee

Committee: Judicial Proceedings

Hearing: Feb. 16, 2022

House Sponsors: The Speaker (By Request- Office of the Attorney General) & Delegate Lopez

Committee: Judiciary

Hearing: Feb. 9, 2022

ACTION: The public hearings have already taken place on these bills. Please encourage legislators, especially those who sit on either the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee or the House Judiciary Committee, to support this legislation.

SB33/HB128 - Criminal Law – Sexual Crimes – Repeal of Spousal Defense (Love Is No Defense to Sexual Crimes):

This bill repeals an exemption from prosecution for specified sexual crimes, if, at the time of the alleged rape or sexual offense, the person was the victim's legal spouse. As explained by the Jewish Coalition Against Domestic Abuse (JCADA), the bill is necessary to repeal a law on the books which allows for marriage to be used as a defense to sexual assault. Victims of sexual assault already face so many barriers to reporting their victimization, including stigma, fear of re-traumatization by the system, and fear of not being believed. Furthermore, few survivors of intimate partners sexual assault report these offenses. These factors should not be exacerbated by antiquated laws that treat women as the property of their husbands, and in so doing, undermine fundamental democratic principles of equality and fairness.

Senate Sponsors: Senator Lee & Senator Waldstreicher

Committee: Judicial Proceedings

Hearing: Feb. 1, 2022

House Sponsors: Delegate Crutchfield, Arikan, Bartlett, Charkoudian, Dumais, Feldmark, Forbes, R. Lewis, Love, Smith, and Terrasa

Committee: Judiciary

Hearing: Jan. 27, 2022

ACTION: The public hearings have already taken place on these bills. Please encourage legislators, especially those who sit on either the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee or the House Judiciary Committee, to support this legislation.

SB129/HB114 – Access to Counsel in Immigration Proceedings Program:

This bill establishes a program - Access to Counsel in Immigration Proceedings – to be administered by the Maryland Legal Services Corporation. The purpose of the program is to provide access to legal representation for individuals detained in immigration proceedings where the individual is subject to removal from the United States. The bill also provides education and outreach to families and communities affect by immigration proceedings and detention. Additionally, the bill establishes the Access to Counsel in Immigration Proceedings Special Fund to provide funding to implement access to legal representation in immigration proceedings. It contains a mandated appropriation of \$8 million dollars. National data shows that immigrants with representation are 10.5 times more likely to win their cases than those without an attorney. 81% of detained immigrants in Maryland had no legal representation. Providing a right to counsel is a proven means of keeping families and communities together and avoiding the resulting social, economic, and public health costs of deportation.

Senate Sponsors: Senator Hettleman & Senator Waldstreicher

Committee: Judicial Proceedings

Hearing: Feb. 3, 2022

House Sponsor: Delegate Williams

Committee: Judiciary

Hearing: Feb. 2, 2022

ACTION: The public hearings have already taken place on these bills. Please encourage legislators, especially those who sit on either the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee or the House Judiciary Committee, to support this legislation.

