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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

DATE: [01/01/2024]

WORCESTER COUNTY:

Snow Hill: New district maps have been hurriedly approved by the county commissioners. These maps delineate county commissioner seats. There were points of contention over the demographics of district 2, the court mandated minority majority district.

Snow Hill: The sports center debate has come back to life. After the previous defeat at the hands of Worcester County voters the Town of Ocean City has formed a task force to try and overcome the issues that were brought up during the prior attempt at getting the sports complex built. The issues hinge on who is going to purchase and manage the complex.

Ocean City: A portion of the coastline off Assateague Island has been removed from consideration for offshore wind development. The Navy voiced concerns about the area and their training needs. This issue will be continuing for the foreseeable future, 3rd quarter of 2024 the City Council of Ocean City will decide whether to file suit against BOEM.

WICOMICO COUNTY:

Salisbury: The “Jeep Weekend” has gotten more support from the county and will be taking place at the old quarry.



SOMERSET COUNTY:

Federal funding has been awarded for coastal bay restoration. Delmarva Resource Conservation and Development Council will receive \$2,253,400, for Advancing Coastal Resilience through Salt Marsh Restoration in Coastal Bays programs.

MARYLAND: With the general assembly coming back into session on January 10th ideas and priorities are starting to take shape. The major issues that are coming to fruition will be state employee staffing, tax increases, budget deficits, and increased crime in Maryland. States attorneys from Baltimore and Prince George's counties have proposed new bills for accountability and streamlining juvenile justice reforms.

Another structural issue is the dwindling transportation trust funding. Officials have suggested increasing tolls across the state and more importantly for us the Bay Bridge.

As soon as session begins the bills that have been pre-filed will be brought to light and co-sponsors and duplicate bills will be sorted out. Some of the Moore administration's bills involve apprenticeships, building code streamlining, and criminal justice reform.

The elephant in the room will be education funding, the Kirwan commission put standards for education funding that each county must meet. Wicomico and Somerset counties should receive massive influxes of cash from the state while Worcester County will face serious funding issues due to the fact that Worcester County is considered a wealthy county due to property values.