



ADVOCACY
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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

DATE: 03/27/2024

WORCESTER COUNTY:

Ocean City: The town council sent the town manager to WorWic community college to discuss the pier construction that's being sought by US Wind. The hearing on 3/25 was extremely well attended by dozens of people from the area. Industries that voiced concern were commercial fishermen, recreational fishermen, realtors, restaurants, and the general public. While there were supporters, their numbers were small and less than a half dozen.

Ocean City: \$20 million in Federal funds have been pledged for the Baltimore Avenue rehabilitation project.

Snow Hill: The county commissioners and the Board of Education are still at odds over funding priorities and have been exchanging barbs about funding priorities.



West Ocean City: Mystic Harbor and Glen Riddle will be the beneficiaries of about \$2.5 million for wastewater treatment upgrades and funds for connecting the Glen Riddle facility to the Ocean Pines Facility.

Snow Hill: The elections for town officials will be held on 5/7/2024.

Berlin: The Wawa project on 113 is once again up for debate in the town. The planning meeting will be 03/27/2024. Issues about traffic and aesthetics have been the main sticking points for town officials.

WICOMICO COUNTY:

Salisbury: The city council wants to use state funds to develop a hotel on lot 10 by the courthouse in downtown Salisbury. There has been public opposition to the proposed project. The developer has said that any diversion of funds would be a breach of trust and in bad faith jeopardize the project.



MARYLAND: The Maryland General Assembly will be ending it's 2024 session on 4/8/2024, if everything goes to plan. Currently the House and Senate leadership are at odds over taxes. While the House has championed a \$1.2 Billion dollar tax package, including the proposed extension of the sales tax to services, Senate President Ferguson has vowed not to allow any tax increases this session. Governor Moore and Senator Ferguson have been united on this position for weeks. While some fees are probably going to be increased, vehicle registration, EV fees, transport company fees, and several others may increase by the end of the session.

Many Delegates and Senators I have spoken to have indicated that the Governor may have to call an extended session that will go past April 8th due to the before mentioned disagreements between the house and senate. While rare it is still a possibility. The state will have a \$1.2 Billion dollar deficit next year that will have to be addressed next session.



With the Key Bridge tragedy on 3/26/24 the state will be facing serious economic repercussions for years to come. The Port of Baltimore is the 11th largest port in the country, number one port for vehicle imports and has hundreds of thousands of jobs that are linked to it. The Key bridge was also a major transportation route for Baltimore, over 11 million vehicles transverse the bridge on a yearly basis. While the national economy will not be affected for long by the Key Bridge accident, the State of Maryland will be stricken with increased unemployment benefit costs, reduced tax revenue, increased traffic in the Baltimore area, and all of the trickle down effects that come along with sudden loss of jobs and tax revenue. This recent accident will pile onto the fiscal woes that the state will be facing in the next few years.