

Legislative Report April 1, 2023

There are still a few weeks left in the Maryland Legislature until *sine die* which is midnight April 10th. Almost 2300 bills have been presented in this session. Crossover day occurred on March 20th, so all bills needed to be cross-filed by that date in the opposite chamber in order to be considered. The MRSPA Legislative Committee is due to have one more meeting on April 11th.

The MRSPA Legislative Committee has been watching several bills carefully that align with our priorities that are now in the opposite chambers including but not limited to:

HB121-treatment plans for mental health

HB274-task force reducing emergency department wait times

HB251- study broadband expansion to unserved or underserved areas

HB774- assisted living abuse/exploitation/neglect

SB3- 9-8-8 for suicide prevention/behavioral health crisis national hotline (sent to governor for signature)

SB534- preserve telehealth access (sent to governor for signature)

Although the committee feels curriculum issues (bills) are not the job of legislators to impose, there remains one curriculum bill left standing which they have sent 2 letters to strongly oppose. HB 119- County Boards of Education/Curriculum Guides and Courses of Study is a good example of how a bill has been transformed totally; gutting the original wording and making it totally something new. There was to be a hearing in the Senate on 3/29 on this bill.

The email campaign for SB0461 (retirement tax elimination) was very successful with over 10% of the state membership sending an email to their legislators. Thanks to those of you who responded to this request. Unfortunately, it appears this bill will die this session.

The state budget continues to move through the legislature. The House and Senate versions are not the same so there will be a joint conference committee to negotiate and work through the different versions. The main sticking point is BOOST voucher funding for private schools.