

Legislative Update- February 13, 2024

As of Saturday, Feb. 10th, there have been 2586 bills introduced to the Maryland Legislature with over 1000 pre-filed before the session even started. The date for introduction without going through the rules committee has passed for both chambers. This year's session runs from January 10-April 8, 2024. A big portion of this session will be addressing the Governor's Priorities and the budget as it is projected there will be a huge shortfall. Other "hot" topics include juvenile justice, mental health, housing, and transportation.

The Legislative Committee meets every 2 weeks during the General Assembly and Updates are posted on the MRSPA website. Go to MRSPA-Legislation (across the top in blue)-Legislative Updates. The most current update posted is February 1, 2024. Priorities are developed each year to reflect issues that impact MRSPA members and all Maryland citizens and are the lens in which bills are reviewed with our pension and health care being the most important. Other priority topics including safety, education, technology, civic participation, consumer protection, quality of life, and long-term care. As of 2-13-24, the committee has discussed 48 bills.

The Legislative Workshop was held on Zoom on January 31, 2024. Of most importance to all members was our pension and it was reported that it is close to 80% fully funded. Brit Kirwan reported extensively on the Blueprint (both what has been accomplished and what are upcoming expectations) and other speakers also had presentations. The listing of all speakers as well as the workshop itself is on the MRSPA website. Members in attendance were told that there will be a Prescription Drug Affordability Coalition Kick-Off event in response to HB 340 and SB 388 (this happened on February 7th). This Coalition is partnering with Maryland Health Care For All to advocate for affordable prescription drugs by expanding the authority of the Board to make high-cost drugs affordable to ALL Marylanders. Our MRSPA Legislative Aide, Virginia Crespo, provided oral testimony in support for SB 388 and the committee sent a letter of support for both bills.