

2020 BALTIMORE JEWISH COUNCIL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES REPORT

The Maryland General Assembly ended the 2020 Legislative Session on March 18, 2020, nearly a month early, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This is the first time since the Civil War that such action has been taken. Nevertheless, the Baltimore Jewish Council's legislative team played an active role until the very end advocating for a robust set of priorities on behalf of the Baltimore Jewish Community and the entire State of Maryland. Below is a list of priority bills and budget items that we advocated for and a report on their final status.

CAPITAL BUDGET

Hillel Student Center at College Park

\$600,000 received for Fiscal Year 21 (received \$1 million in both FY19 and FY20)

Maryland Hillel is to commence construction of a new 38,000-square foot facility. The new facility will empower the organization to expand its functions and contributions to the student experience, including interfaith programming, social justice programming and guest lectures.

Pearlstone Center Renovation and Expansion

\$1 million received for FY21

Utilizing 180 acres of rolling hills, farmland, and forest in northwest Baltimore County, the Pearlstone Campus impacts over 20,000 annual participants from across the state of Maryland. In order to accommodate more community visitors and expanded programming, a new Pearlstone Campus Master Plan has been crafted. The plan will double Pearlstone's impact and engage over 40,000 annual participants, including 1,000 public school students at the Multicultural Village.

OPERATING BUDGET

Maryland/Israel Development Center (MIDC)

\$300,000 received for FY21, \$25,000 increase from FY20

The Maryland/Israel Development Center (MIDC) is a non-profit economic development organization that promotes job creation by facilitating bilateral trade, investment, and R&D cooperation between Maryland and Israel. The \$25,000 increase goes to a new Maryland/Israel binational accelerator created by MIDC to help Israeli businesses find opportunities, partners and customers in the state.

Aging-in-Place for Holocaust Survivors

\$350,000 received for FY21

Needs of Holocaust Survivors are increasing every year as they advance in age. The number of Holocaust Survivors requiring personal care assistance from Jewish Community Services (JCS) has been increasing, from an average of 88 clients per month in FY16 to over 110 per month in FY19.

SAFE Stop Abuse of Elders Program

\$75,000 received for FY21

Data from the 2010 National Elder Mistreatment Study indicates that 1 in 10 respondents over the age of 60 reported abuse in 2009. The Stop Abuse of Elders Program (SAFE) was established to treat and prevent elder abuse. This collaboration between agencies of The Associated provides an effective and coordinated response for victims and their families, and supplies prevention education for the community.

Community Network: Empowering Older Adults to Thrive in Supportive Communities

\$225,000 received for FY21

Northwest Neighbors Connecting (NNC) is a member-driven village engaging older adults in our community in meaningful ways. Last year, NNC members and volunteers provided an average of 20 rides per month, and formed CHAlway, a volunteer ride sharing program. In addition, NNC volunteers provided friendly check-in calls to each member at least once per month.

LifeBridge Health Diabetes Medical Home Extender Program

\$250,000 received for FY21

The Diabetes Medical Extender Program helps uninsured and underinsured people with diabetes obtain increased access to care in their homes, reducing the need for hospital and emergency room visits.

NONPUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING

BOOST (Broadening Options and Opportunities for Students Today)

\$7.4 million approved for FY21

The BOOST Scholarships program provides K-12 students whose families are Free and Reduced Meals eligible an opportunity to find the best educational fit for their needs by awarding students with scholarships to attend nonpublic schools.

Textbooks and Technology for Nonpublic Schools

\$6.04 million approved for FY21

The Nonpublic Textbook and Technology Program provides funding for the purchase of textbooks and computer hardware and software for eligible nonpublic schools.

Construction for Aging Nonpublic Schools

\$3.5 million approved for FY21

The Nonpublic Aging Schools Program provides grants to eligible aging nonpublic schools to renovate and improve school facilities.

Security Improvements for Aging Nonpublic Schools

\$3.5 million available for FY21

The Nonpublic Aging Schools Security Program provides grants to nonpublic schools for security infrastructure and technology improvements.

BOND INITIATIVES

Gordon Center for the Performing Arts \$150,000 received for FY21

The Peggy and Yale Gordon Center for Performing Arts is on the campus of the Rosenbloom Owings Mills JCC and is recognized as Baltimore County's premier performing arts center. The 550-seat Gordon Center serves over 30,000 patrons annually, drawing audiences predominantly from Baltimore County and Baltimore City. Bond funds will be used for a renovation of the Gordon Center's lobby.

SECURITY AND HATE CRIMES PRIORITIES

Senate Bill 161 / House Bill 5 – Crimes - Hate Crimes - Use of an Item or a Symbol to Threaten or Intimidate, Sen. Elfreth/Del. Chang

This bill expands current law regarding hate crimes to include prohibiting someone from placing or inscribing an item or symbol, including an actual or depicted Noose or Swastika, without the express permission of the owner of the building or property, the owner's agent, or a lawful occupant, with the intent to threaten or intimidate any person or group of persons.

[Final status: This bill passed and awaits the Governor's signature.](#)

Operating Budget - \$5 Million for the Security for Schools, Child Care Centers and Places of Worship at Risk of Hate Crimes

\$5 million has been designated in the Governor's proposed FY21 budget for security infrastructure upgrades and personnel for Schools, Childcare Centers and Places of Worship at Risk of Hate Crimes. \$2 million dollars is for schools and childcare centers at risk of hate crimes in the Maryland Center for School Safety's budget. \$3 million dollars is included for the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention for the safety of places of worship at risk of hate crimes.

Final status: \$5 million was approved in the FY21 budget.

Senate Bill 633 / House Bill 541 Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission - Training Requirements - Hate Crimes, Sen. Waldstreicher/Del. Lopez

This bill ensures that all police officers in Maryland are properly trained on how to respond to hate crimes. This bill lays out training standards for all new officers and those currently serving. Such guidelines would include training on the criminal laws concerning hate crimes, the appropriate treatment of victims of hate crimes, and the procedures for properly reporting hate crime information.

[Final status: This bill passed and awaits the Governor's signature.](#)

House Bill 1164 Criminal Law – Domestic Terrorism, Del. Rosenberg

This bill would have defined and criminalized Domestic Terrorism, classifying it as a felony. It would be defined as a crime committed with the intent to injure or kill another while attempting to intimidate the population or influence government policy. Additionally, this bill would have required the Governor's Office of Homeland Security to report on the State's efforts to detect and prevent acts of Domestic Terrorism.

[Final status: This bill did not receive a committee vote.](#)

AGING PRIORITIES

Senate Bill 966 / HB1615 – Health Facilities – Assisted Living Programs – Referrals and Licenses, Sen. Hettleman/Del. Kelly

This bill creates several provisions to make assisted living care in Maryland safer and the process more transparent. First, it prohibits assisted living referral agencies from referring an individual to an unlicensed facility. Additionally, referral agencies would be required to disclose their financial relationships with the facilities they are referring clients to. Referral agencies would also be required to register with the Office of Health Quality in order to operate. Lastly, this bill makes a violation of the Consumer Protection Act to operate an unlicensed assisted living facility.

[Final status: This bill passed and awaits the Governor's signature.](#)

House Bill 498– Department of Aging – Grants For Aging-In-Place Programs – Funding, Del. Hill

This bill mandates at least \$100,000 in funding in the Governor's annual budget for the Nonprofits For Our Aging Neighbors (NANA) program under the Department of Aging. Funds would be awarded to nonprofit organizations and area agencies on aging to either expand existing aging-in-place programs or spur the development of new ones. Existing aging-in-place programs would be required to provide a minimum one-to-one match for the funding received. New innovative programs would not be required to provide a match. Additionally, 20% of this funding will be dedicated towards senior village programs.

[Final status: This bill passed and awaits the Governor's signature.](#)

Senate Bill 670 / House Bill 564– Department of Aging – Assisted Living Program Subsidies – Determinations, Sen. Zucker/Sen. Hettleman/Del. Valentino-Smith

This bill would have increased the Senior Assisted Living Group Home Subsidy for the first time in over 20 years. It would have mandated an increase from \$650 up to \$1,500, while also tying the subsidy to the consumer price index, ensuring that it would increase over time as inflation occurs.

[Final status: This bill was approved by the House but did not receive a committee vote in the Senate.](#)

NORTHWEST BALTIMORE AND PIMLICO

Senate Bill 987 / House Bill 1056 – Racing and Community Development Act of 2020 Sen. Guzzone/Speaker Jones

The legislation keeps the Preakness in Baltimore by redesigning and rebuilding Pimlico Race Course. The new facility could be used year-round for recreational activities on the infield, community meetings, arts festivals, concerts and banquets. Parcels on the property could be developed for mixed-use commercial, residential and retail uses. The plan would also provide for year-round racing at Laurel Park through a new clubhouse, training facilities, stables, and housing for track workers. The bill authorizes the Maryland Stadium Authority to issue \$375 million in bonds to fund the projects, to be paid back through casino proceeds already earmarked to subsidize the racing industry and through the Maryland Lottery.

[Final status: This bill passed and awaits the Governor's signature.](#)

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