



**Frederick County
Government
Frederick, Maryland**

News Release

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COUNTY COMMISSIONERS PRESENT 2014 LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE TO FREDERICK DELEGATION

FREDERICK, MD – The Frederick Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) today presented the 2014 legislative package to the Frederick County Delegation for consideration at the delegation’s upcoming meetings during the Maryland legislative session which starts on January 8, 2014.

The BOCC will also discuss the legislative package at the delegation’s public meeting at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, December 14, at Winchester Hall, 12 East Church Street, Frederick, Md.

Board President Blaine Young commented, “We believe the proposals we have approved represent a streamlined package of the closing priorities of this board under a county commissioner form of government. We are pleased to present this package to our state legislators on behalf of the citizens of Frederick County.”

Highlights of the legislative items include:

1. Modification of Retroactive Mandatory Stormwater Management Fees Imposed on Select Counties

House Bill 987, “Stormwater Management – Watershed Restoration and Protection Program,” adopted during the 2012 Legislative Session, requires Frederick County along with 10 other jurisdictions to enact a stormwater remediation fee.

The Frederick County Office of Environmental Sustainability has projected that a fee from this legislation and the costs from Senate Bill 236, the “Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Protection Act of 2012,” could cost Frederick County citizens \$1.88 billion. The BOCC is requesting a repeal or modification of the retroactive stormwater management fees imposed on select Maryland counties. The BOCC does not believe that this “rain tax” is fair. The state should not require the county to impose such a mandatory fee.

2. Elimination of Reference to Maximum Value of Gaming Permits Issued for Raffles

As requested by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, this item would amend state law to allow up to four annual raffles exceeding the \$5,000 maximum amount for local charitable organizations in Frederick County under Title 13 Gaming in the Criminal Law Article of the *Annotated Code of Maryland*.

(more)

During the 2013 Session of the Maryland General Assembly, Senate Bill 315 and House Bill 414 were enacted, which repealed the limitation on the number of raffles per year that an organization in Frederick County may conduct with a maximum prize of \$5,000 or less. The bill allowed the county commissioners to determine the number of raffles an organization may hold in a single year.

3. Amendments to the Annotated Code of Maryland Pertaining to Charter Government Transition

Due to the citizen-adopted Frederick County Charter which is effective on December 1, 2014, certain transitional provisions will need to be made to state law to accommodate the new form of government. As of that date, Frederick County will no longer have the county commissioner form of government. The county will have a county executive and a seven-member county council.

4. Property Tax Exemption for Properties Owned By a Land Trust

The county requests a state real property tax exemption for a property owned by a local land trust.

5. Authority to Allow Payment of Wages with a Debit Card

This provision would authorize Frederick County Government to make wage payments with a debit card. Current Maryland law only permits for the payment of wages by cash, check or direct deposit. Authorizing payment of wages with a debit card gives the county another option to pay wages to an employee who does not have a bank account.

6. Salary Adjustments (Frederick County Sheriff and Judges of the Orphans Court)

The last salary increase for the Frederick County Sheriff was in 2005. An approved salary increase would not take effect until after the next sheriff is sworn into office after the 2014 General Election. The current salary is set at \$100,000 per year.

The board would tie the sheriff's salary to the rank of a captain or major in the Maryland State Police.

The judges and chief judge of the Orphans Court last had a salary increase adopted during the 1997 Session of the Maryland General Assembly. Their salary was set at \$6,500 per year for the chief judge of the Orphans Court and \$6,000 per year for the Orphans Court judges. The county's request would be for the chief judge to be set at \$16,500 per year and \$15,000 per year for the judges of the Orphans Court. Additionally, the next salary increase would not take effect until after the election in 2014 of the Orphans Court judges.

7. Request to Change 30-or-More Day Exemption for Frederick County Hotel Rental Tax

At the request of the Tourism Council of Frederick County, the board supports amending the *Annotated Code of Maryland* and the *Frederick County Code* to redefine the length of a transient stay in Frederick County as a period not exceeding 90 days, instead of the current 30-day limit.

For additional information, visit www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/legislative or contact Legislative Coordinator Ragen Cherney at 301-600-1049 or via e-mail at rcherney@FrederickCountyMD.gov.