



ST. MARY'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT
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NEWS RELEASE *for Immediate Release*

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St. Mary's County AA+ Credit Rating Affirmed

Overall rating outlook deemed "Stable"

LEONARDTOWN, MD – As part of its routine surveillance review Fitch Ratings has affirmed St. Mary's County's AA+ credit rating on approximately \$83.9 million of outstanding unlimited tax general obligation bonds. The bonds were used principally to fund school construction but also included road construction, improvements at the College of Southern Maryland and other public facilities.

Though the county is currently not selling bonds the review is not considered uncommon. Ratings agencies typically update their review whenever a county has not sold bonds in a few years. Fitch last issued a review of the county's rating in 2011. The last issuance of new bonds by the County was in 2009. The rating agency also affirmed the county's fiscal outlook as stable.

In its review Fitch pointed to the county's "healthy reserves and budgetary flexibility" as a credit strength, despite a dependence on the military and federal government and the potential of reduced spending; consistent preservation of a separate 6% bond rating reserve and \$1.6 million rainy day fund.

"In light of the overall economic climate this is very good news for St. Mary's County," said Dr. Rebecca Bridgett, St. Mary's County Administrator.

The agency also made mention of the county's "careful management of its capital program spending and issuance of debt" as well as "rapid amortization of debt." Fitch concludes the county is on track to reduce 80.2% of its current outstanding debt within ten years.

"This report is one more indication of how St. Mary's County and the Board of County Commissioners continue to manage the county's finances," said Commissioner President Jack Russell. "This review confirms our conservative approach to fiscal management while continuing to meet the needs of our growing community."

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