



# PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Rushern L. Baker, III  
County Executive

JAN 18 2018

The Honorable Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr.  
Maryland Governor  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1924

The Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr.  
Senate President  
State House, H-107  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1924

The Honorable Michael E. Busch  
Speaker of the House  
State House, H-101  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1924

Re: **Prince George's County – 2018 State Legislative Priorities**

Dear Governor Hogan, President Miller, and Speaker Busch:

As we head toward the 2018 Session of the Maryland General Assembly, we, the Prince George's County Executive and Prince George's County Council, are resolved to continue collaborative efforts to further our common goals for the betterment of our County. We must protect critical State funding necessary to: continue the improvement of our school system; expand our commercial tax base; stimulate economic development and job creation; and ensure the health, safety and welfare of our citizens.

The County's 2018 Legislative Agenda focuses primarily on pursuing the County's budget priorities, specifically: securing the County's fair share of critical K-12 education funding; resisting efforts to divert public education dollars to private schools; and procuring additional public school construction and public safety funding. We will continue to protect transportation projects that help provide the infrastructure investments we need to continue major economic development activity and expand our commercial tax base. In addition to working to

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**Prince George's County – 2018 State Legislative Priorities**

protect against further cuts to funding for other essential programs, we will also work to protect other issues that are of critical importance to all Prince Georgians, including the precipitous rise in prescription drug prices, renewable energy expansion, protection of the Chesapeake Bay and access to affordable health care.

Prince George's County continues on our path as a primary economic engine for Maryland. With the available land inventory and the abundance of transit oriented development nodes throughout our jurisdiction, we are poised to turn these assets into revenue generation and job creation hubs that will significantly benefit the County and the State of Maryland. Moreover, our County government is committing its own resources in partnership with the State to make these goals a reality. Therefore, it is both logical and imperative that the State and County continue in partnership to further Prince George's County's growth and the future health and prosperity of the State of Maryland.

Working together, we are looking forward to a successful 2018 Legislative Session and, most importantly, the continued growth and prosperity of our beloved Prince George's County.

Respectfully,



Rushern L. Baker, III  
Prince George's County Executive



Dannielle M. Glaros, Chair  
Prince George's County

Enclosure

cc:

Honorable Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor  
Prince George's County Senate Delegation Members  
Prince George's County House Delegation Members  
Prince George's County Council Members  
Robert J. Williams, Jr., Prince George's County Council Administrator  
William M. Hunt, Prince George's County Deputy Council Administrator  
Glenda R. Wilson, Chief of Staff, Office of the County Executive  
Nicholas A. Majett, Chief Administrative Officer, Office of the County Executive

# TOP PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PRIORITIES FOR THE 2018 SESSION OF THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

## PUBLIC SCHOOL OPERATING & CONSTRUCTION FUNDING

Obtaining full operating and sufficient construction funding to support our public schools remains a top priority for Prince George's County.

***Construction Funding:*** Prince George's County has some of the oldest public school facilities in the State of Maryland as well as a growing student population. In order to ensure that our children are prepared for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, we must provide them with a 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning environment. As a result, we are committed to securing appropriate formula funding from the State for the County's K-12 education system as well as new and innovative initiatives to increase funding opportunities for the County's aging K-12 education facilities. These new initiatives will seek to utilize public-private partnerships and proven groundbreaking methods of reduced construction time and creative funding that will help ease school overcrowding sooner than traditional funding and construction approaches. This funding will help pay for the repair, construction, renovation, and modernization of the County's public schools. We will continue to advocate for long-term funding mechanisms by working with the State legislature and the Governor's Office to address significant capital needs to upgrade Prince George's County public school facilities.

***PreK-12 Education Funding:*** Although the Kirwan Commission signaled it will delay recommendations relating to school finance issues until the conclusion of the 2018 General Assembly session, the County will continue to urge the Delegation to work with partners from around the State to support any proposals that would help achieve adequate and equitable funding for the County's school system, including any proposal seeking an increase in State funding for pre-kindergarten services.

## TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

***Transportation and Infrastructure Projects:*** With the growth of the County and its focus on sustainable development, there are critical projects that will require the State to invest in transportation and infrastructure. We will work to protect State funding for critical mass transportation, road and pedestrian safety projects, as well as funding for local road maintenance. It is also vital that we continue to advocate for transparency and equity in the process for funding local transportation project requests.

***Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority Funding:*** We must effectively collaborate with our regional partners on transit funding mechanisms—including a dedicated funding source to help secure the future of Metrorail and Metrobus.

***Local Transit Funding:*** We will urge legislators to continue to pursue rapid transit alternatives and multi-jurisdictional corridors and to fully fund the operating deficit subsidy for locally operated bus systems such as The Bus in Prince George's County and the Ride-On in Montgomery County.

***Businesses Impacted by Purple Line Construction:*** We will support efforts to ease the impact of mass transit projects such as the Purple Line on the County's small businesses and residences near construction areas.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

***Enhanced 9-1-1 Service:*** We support funding for next-generation (enhanced 9-1-1) technology to ensure that our emergency services network is reliable, efficient and up to date. It is essential that we strive to improve wireless caller locations, accommodate incoming text and video to 9-1-1 and manage crisis driven call overflows. We urge the Delegation to work with partners from around the State to ensure improved delivery of essential 9-1-1 services.

***Crime Reduction Funding:*** We urge the Delegation to continue to safeguard public safety funding to ensure that the historic downward trend in the crime rate over the last seven years in Prince George's County continues. While the County is undeniably a safer and more attractive place to live, work and visit, we support the Delegation's continued efforts to protect and increase valuable State funding for County agencies focused on crime reduction and prevention. Additional resources are critical as our public safety agencies, Office of the State's Attorney, Department of Corrections, and Health and Human Services agencies continue collaborative efforts to reduce instances of the most serious crimes such as domestic violence.

***Opioid Crisis Funding:*** The opioid crisis continues to plague our County, State and Nation so it is imperative that the State continues to step up its efforts to manage this epidemic. One of the most critical elements we urge the Delegation to focus on is ensuring that sufficient funding for residential substance abuse treatment is provided in the State budget.

## HEALTHCARE

***Prescription Drug Affordability:*** The skyrocketing increase in the price of prescription drugs continues to pose major challenges for many families and senior residents in Prince George's County. In the last few years alone, drug prices have risen approximately 10% annually while inflation only increased 1.2%. We urge the Delegation to help correct this unnecessary and unjust assault on all Marylanders by supporting legislation that: (1) allows pharmacists to provide information to consumers regarding lower cost drug options; (2) require prescription drug corporations to provide notice of new expensive drugs, increase in prices of older drugs, and public justification for pricing decisions; and (3) make expensive drugs affordable by creating a Prescription Drug Cost Review Commission to establish payment rates for expensive drugs that create affordability problems for Marylanders.