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Council Chair Calvin S. Hawkins, II Joins Regional At-Large Council Members To Host Panel Discussion Addressing Regional Violent Crime on April 14

Council Chair Hawkins, D.C. Council Member Robert White and Montgomery County Council Member Will Jawando, Co-Host Regional Panel Discussion on Addressing Violent Crime

By ANGELA J. ROUSON
Prince George's County Council Media

Prince George's County Council Chair and At-Large Member Calvin S. Hawkins, II, will join D.C. At-Large Council Member Robert White, and Montgomery County At-Large Council Member Will Jawando to lead the regional panel discussion, "How Do We Effectively Address Violent Crime in Our Region?" from 6:30-8:30 p.m., on Thursday, April 14, 2022, at Montgomery College Cultural Arts Center, Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus, 7995 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20912.

"How Do We Effectively Address Violent Crime in Our Region?" will focus on the underlying causes of violent crime in Prince George's and Montgomery counties, and in the District of Columbia,

and panelists will discuss the impact of the issue on residents and communities throughout the region. The dialogue will include ways to effectively address violent crime, and panelists will provide recommendations for legislation, initiatives, and resource-oriented solutions for stemming the tide of violent crime across the region.

Invited panelists include Hon. Alexander Williams, Jr., Retired U.S. District Court Judge for the District of Maryland; Former Montgomery County Police Captain and Montgomery College Professor, Sonia Pruitt; Resident Fellow, Brookings Institution and Associate Professor of Public Policy, Department of Political Science, Howard University, Keesha Middlemass, PhD.; Don't Mute DC Co-Founder, Ronald Moten; and Founder and Chairman of the National Association for the Advancement of Returning Citizens, Eric Weaver.

Council Chair Hawkins says a discussion addressing crime in our communities is a necessary conversation. "Prince George's and Montgomery counties, and the District of Columbia, face similar challenges with the types of crimes our communities are experiencing. It is important to work together to identify effective and sustainable solutions that reduce crime and keep communities safe. Collaborating as regional leaders and engaging in community conversation is a crucial part of this process."

"Violent crime has risen drastically in our region," said D.C. Councilmember White. "Here in the District, violent crime is up 21%. Since the problem crosses jurisdictions, we believe that the solutions must cross jurisdictions as well. So, we

must discuss a regional approach. Now is the time for us to have difficult and diverse discussions about how we address violent crime in a way that makes us safe today and ten years from now. The best way to do that is to hear from both experts and community members."

Montgomery County Councilmember Jawando said, "While the increase in crime is a national trend, we must work together in our region to address the underlying reasons for crime – solutions that require an interdisciplinary and community wide approach. I believe that working together we can address the current upswing in crime and build trust in our communities. Everyone deserves to feel and be safe."

For more information, or to attend, please visit, <https://tinyurl.com/RegPublicSafety>

Football Partners With Bowie State Student and Be The Match to Help Fight Sickle Cell



PHOTO COURTESY BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY

The Bulldogs collaborated with Be The Match and Bowie State student Kayla Smith Owens in a marrow registry drive on April 6.

By JOLISA WILLIAMS
Bowie State University Athletics

BOWIE, Md. (April 6, 2022)—The Bowie State football team continued its tradition of community service this afternoon when the Bulldogs collaborated with Be The Match and Bowie State student Kayla Smith Owens in a marrow registry drive Wednesday (April 6) afternoon.

"It was a great opportunity partnering with Be The Match," said head football coach Damon Wilson. "This was a great

opportunity for our football program to support Ms. Kayla and thousands of others across the world. We stress the importance of giving back in our program and helping others around us."

The Bulldogs dedicated time to assist current BSU senior Smith Owens who was diagnosed with sickle cell at birth. The criminal justice major did not start to experience any effects of the disease until she was 11 years old. Although her disease seemed to be manageable, it was not until she started college where Smith Owens

would have to take time off from school because it appeared to be too much. While attending Bowie State, Smith Owens realized that there were other students fighting this disease just like her and she realized that she could help others by sharing her story highlighted by a round table discussion at the White House about the sickle cell disease.

"I am super grateful that the football

See PARTNERS Page A5

In Historic Vote, Senate Confirms Jackson as First Black Woman Justice on Supreme Court

By MARGARET ATTRIDGE, ROSS O'KEEFE, CHRIS BARYLICK and ASHKAN MOTAMEDI
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON (April 7, 2022)—The Senate on Thursday confirmed Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson as the next associate justice on the Supreme Court and the first Black woman to sit on the nation's highest court.

The historic 53-47 vote was bipartisan, with a trio of Republicans—Sens. Susan Collins of Maine, Lisa Murkowski of Alaska and Mitt Romney of Utah—joining all the Senate Democrats in supporting Jackson.

While President Joe Biden and Jackson watched the proceedings

from the White House's Roosevelt Room, Vice President Kamala Harris presided over the confirmation vote.

"We've taken another step toward making our highest court reflect the diversity of America," Biden tweeted after the vote. "She will be an incredible Justice, and I was honored to share this moment with her."

An ebullient Harris told reporters as she left the United States Capitol

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TATYANA MONNAY/CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON—Members of the Congressional Black Caucus hail the confirmation of Ketanji Brown Jackson to the Supreme Court during a press conference in the United States Capitol.

District 6 Council Member Derrick Leon Davis Resigns Council Seat, Effective April 15

By KAREN D. CAMPBELL
Prince George's County Council Media

Prince George's County Council Member Derrick Leon Davis, who has represented District 6 residents on the Council since winning a Special Election in 2011, has resigned his Council seat, effective Friday, April 15, 2022.

Council Member Davis was elected in November 2014 to serve his first four-year term of office as the Council Member for District 6 and was re-elected to serve a second four-year term in the November 2018 General Election. His current term was set to expire on December 5, 2022.

On Thursday, April 7, 2022, Council Member Davis submitted the following statement upon his resignation.

From the Desk of Prince George's County Council Member Derrick Leon Davis

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY COUNCIL, DISTRICT 6

THURSDAY, APRIL 7, 2022

Friends,

As Prince Georgians, we share a destiny and a purpose. Together, we have accomplished so much (far too much to chronicle here)! And we have weathered many, many storms!

I cannot thank all of you enough for allowing me the latitude to do 'Big Things on Purpose,' for Prince Georgians, and for the opportunity to shine the light of Prince George's promise on the region.

Remaining in the spirit of Gratitude, I thank God for my Wife and Best Friend, Sherry, who taught me the critical lesson of obedience.

Your support has meant everything. Scripture says, "He who finds a wife, finds a good thing."

To my District 6 Team—Nell Johnson; Rita Lassiter; and Lenne White—You are the BEST in the business! Thank you for using your remarkable talents and skills to serve our residents.

I pray that I have served well. It is my prayer that I have done so to His Glory, as I have given my best daily.

This experience has truly been an honor and a blessing.

Now, the time has come for me to rest, restore, and prepare for the next leg of this journey; therefore, I am resigning my seat on the Prince George's County Council, effective Close of Business, Friday, April 15, 2022. May God continue to bless us all with His Grace and Mercy. Thank you.

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TOWNS and NEIGHBORS

In & Around Morningside-Skyline by Mary McHale 301-735-3451

Mayor Benn Cann unopposed in Morningside's election

Morningsiders will be going to the polls Monday, May 2, to elect a Mayor and two Council Members. Polls will be open 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. I'd like to introduce you to the candidates, some in their own words:

Mayor Benn Cann

"I am asking for your vote and support as I enter into my 3rd term as Mayor. In my first two terms, I was able to establish a Town government domain (morningside.md.gov), create a website, create an atmosphere of collaboration, establish the Town as 'Banner City' status, strengthen the relations with businesses... I have intentionally made myself very accessible to feedback, concerns, and criticisms at times to continue to have a Town that we can be proud to call home."

Councilmember John Anthony

John is "rerunning" for Town Councilmember. He was born in D.C. and moved to Morningside in 1968. His grandparents lived here and raised his father here. John married Ruth 44 years ago and they have three children. Two of those children, four granddaughters and a great-granddaughter live in Morningside, which makes 6 generations of Anthonys in the Town. John was a previous Vice Mayor and a Councilmember. He's now retired and able to dedicate the time to the Town once again and "to continue making Morningside a safe and pleasant place to live. I would appreciate your support."

Mrs. Sharon Fowler

Sharon is seeking a return to the Town Council where she did a great job. She is ready to dedicate her time to the needs of Morningside. "I'm prepared to work on any issues pertaining to residents and local businesses while maintaining a budget that benefits everyone. With my experience with the Town for over 30 years, I believe getting involved truly makes a difference. I would appreciate your vote on May 2nd."

Mr. Anthony Fontaine Pitts

Anthony grew up in D.C., served in the Army as a Wire Systems Installer at

Fort Hood, Texas, and Frankfurt, Germany, until honorable discharge in 1990. He moved to Morningside, joined Local #5 Ironworkers Union and went to work for Aggregate Industries in Bladensburg. In addition to serving his community, the public and our country, he has "embarked upon his passion for God as an ordained Baptist Deacon." Anthony desires continuing to serve his community as a member of the Town Council.

Town of Morningside: Bingo Bunny and Egg Hunt

Bingo Bunny Breakfast & Egg Hunt is coming up April 16, from 9 a.m. to noon at the Town Hall. Breakfast of donuts, fruit & juice will be followed by five Fun Games of Bingo, door prizes and an Easter Egg Hunt (ages 3 to 12). They must bring a basket, for all the eggs they find. Reservations and pre-payment required. If it hasn't been reserved out, tickets can be purchased Monday thru Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Municipal Center. Information: 301-736-2300.

Morningside will host a Town Meeting, Tues., April 19, 7 p.m. at the Town Hall.

Mad Hatters Tea Party for Mother's Day, May 7, 10 a.m.

Spring Clean-up 2022, Sat., May 14 & Sunday, May 15, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day. More about this in next week's column.

Zoo's Pandaversary April 16-17

The National Zoo plans a "pandaversary" April 16 and 17 to celebrate 50 years of giant pandas in Washington. The event will include dance performances, scientist talks, showings of a new panda documentary and treats for Mei Xian, Tian Tian and Xiao Qi Ji.

By the way, if you want to visit Mei Xian, Tian Tian and Xiao Qi Ji, you'd better go soon because China has decided these three pandas will leave Washington by December 2023. There is no plan to send more.

Changing landscape

Fire broke out at Walmart in Clinton

April 1. Two people—one a fireman—were treated at the hospital for non-threatening injuries. The fire, believed to have started in the paper towel aisle, was doused within a short time. The store has partially reopened.

This is Seafood has opened in Clinton and got a rave review in Tim Carman's "Casual Dining" in the Post Weekend. Fried whiting, with their irresistible curls at the tip of the fillets, perfect for dipping in hot sauce; shrimp fried rice mixed with peas and carrots and irregular deposits of wok-fried egg; fried catfish po' boy turbocharged with hot pepper relish; and what he calls the showstopper, a Low-country boil of shrimp, potatoes, sausage, corn and snow crab legs "so clean and sweet you'd swear you were eating at Prime Steak, Joe's Seafood and Stone Crab." Open 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., Mon. thru Thursday; 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Fri. & Sat.; noon to 9 p.m. Sunday. At 8929 Woodyard Rd., Clinton.

The U.S. Botanic Garden Conservatory has reopened after a two-year closure. It includes the Garden Court known for its fountains and the Tropics, the rainforest sitting beneath a 93-foot glass dome. Look for the new exhibit, "Cultivate: Growing Food in a Changing World," and a new shop run by Friends of the U.S. Botanic Garden. Open daily 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., 100 Maryland Ave. SW. Free.

A home at 6721 Larkspur Rd. in Morningside has sold for \$275,000.

May they rest in peace

- William "Jay" Carpenter, 79, of Clinton, who in 1967 was a member of the first class of Black firefighters hired as recruits for the Prince George's County Fire Dept., died Feb. 6. He rose to fire lieutenant/acting captain before retiring in 1992. In retirement, he sold real estate for Long & Foster.
- Elsie Abbate "Jane" Hoffmann, 89, who volunteered at Holy Family Church in Hillcrest Heights after a

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Events

5k Walk/Run for Autism

RIVERDALE, Md. (April 7, 2022)—The Department of Parks in Recreation in Prince George's County, part of the M-NCPPC, is proud to announce its 5k Glow Walk/Run for Autism. Proceeds will benefit the YouFit Scholarship for Autism, which provides eligible youth on the Autism Spectrum with funds for the Department's summer day camps.

Taking place **April 23, 6:30 and 7:30 p.m.** at Watkins Regional Park, the 5k Glow is a fun walk/run to raise funds for scholarship. It is not a timed event. The walk/run will take place rain or shine. In the case of extreme temperatures, the event will be canceled for the public's safety.

Please plan to arrive fifteen minutes before your scheduled wave for parking and check-in. Face coverings and physical distancing are strongly encouraged during check-in and at the starting line.

Registration (<https://bit.ly/34rGCaq>) is required by April 22, 2022. Registration fee is \$15 for ages 6 and older. Ages 5 and younger are free. Ages 15 & younger must be accompanied by an adult registrant. For additional information, email Central.Inclusion@pgparks.com or call 301-249-7200.

April Events at Montpelier Arts Center

RIVERDALE, Md. (April 1, 2022)—The Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County, part of the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), is proud to announce its new events at Montpelier Arts Center in Laurel, Md. Available to the public throughout April, they include:

Friday, April 22, 2022, 8 p.m.—Eric Byrd Trio—For almost two decades, the Eric Byrd Trio, pianist/ vocalist, Eric Byrd, bassist Bhagwan Khalsa, and drummer Alphonso Young Jr., have traveled the world as enthusiastic ambassadors of jazz. Rooted in swing and be-bop, the trio also embraces gospel and blues as core elements of their expansive performance style. Their body of work spans seven unique studios and live recordings in which they shine as a trio. Montpelier is delighted to bring the Eric Byrd Trio to the stage to perform standard and original compositions.

The cost of tickets for Live! @ Montpelier Concert Series is \$25. Call 301-377-7800 for more information and to purchase a ticket or purchase online through ParksDirect.

Saturday, April 30, 10 a.m.—4 p.m.—Annual Montpelier Festival of Herbs, Tea, and the Arts—Welcome spring and delight in the sights and sounds of nature, art, and history at this fun festival for the entire family. While visiting the Montpelier Arts Center, our Resident Artists will be happy to meet you and give engaging conversation about the art they do, the media used to produce it, and in some cases, give a demonstration of their techniques. On your stroll through the Arts Center, take time to see our three galleries and view the exhibitions of David Brosch, Catherine Kleeman, and the Laurel Art Guild 53rd Annual Juried Exhibition. At 1 p.m., join us in the Main Gallery for a classical recital featuring Grace Liu to round out your day with us.

Montpelier Arts Center is open Monday through Saturday to the public from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Learn more about these and other April events at <https://www.mncppc.org/2143/Montpelier-Arts-Center>.

Maryland Day Returns to College Park!

The University of Maryland invites you to unlock a world of learning, discovery and exploration at Maryland Day. Take part in hundreds of family-friendly events and interactive exhibits during a daylong celebration and inspiring journey across campus.

The University of Maryland is hosting our largest community outreach event, Maryland Day, established in 1999. The campus-wide event traditionally welcomes over 80,000+ to College Park and features a day of learning, fun and discovery. Attendees come from the Baltimore and Washington D.C. metropolitan areas and enjoy hundreds of free family-friendly events and activities. Event Information:

Saturday, April 30, 2022, 10 a.m.—4 p.m.

Free admission and parking

Shuttle-UM buses will be available to transport guests around the event.

Website: <https://marylandday.umd.edu/>

Online Workshop Offers Ways to Cope for Those Mourning the Loss of Their Pet

PASADENA, Md. (March 30, 2022)—For adults mourning the loss of a beloved animal friend, Chesapeake Life Center will offer a free Pet Loss Workshop from 6 to 8 p.m. **Thursday, May 19.**

This workshop is sponsored by Perfect Pet Resort and will be held via Zoom. It will include a welcome, a time to share individual stories, an introduction to the grief process, an art activity to honor your beloved pet, brainstorming and suggestions for healthy coping.

Registration is required and can be completed online at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/pet-loss-workshop-sponsored-by-perfect-pet-resort-tickets-306440621147>.

For questions, contact 888-501-7077 or griefinfo@chesapeakelifecenter.org. Visit www.hospicechesapeake.org/events for a complete listing of in-person and virtual grief support groups and workshops for adults and children.

Maryland State Police Accepting Applications for 2022 Leadership and Career Development Seminar

PIKESVILLE, Md. (April 8, 2022)—The Maryland State Police announces the third annual Leadership and Career Development Seminar, a free event held to develop interest and introduce future generations of young men and women about the career opportunities with the Department, will take place in July. Applications for the free event are still being accepted.

The two-day, action packed seminar is free and will be held from July 29-31, 2022 at the Maryland State Police Training Academy in Sykesville. For more application guidelines, please visit <https://mdsp.maryland.gov/Careers/Pages/Youth-Leadership-Seminar.aspx>

CORRECTION

A Capital News Service story entitled "Paid Family, Medical Leave Awaiting Maryland Governor's Signature", which published in the April 7, 2022 edition of The Prince George's Post incorrectly stated the bill, Time to Care Act of 2022, would take effect Jan. 1, 2023. It takes effect Oct. 1, 2023.

The story also incorrectly said there would be a cap on employer and employee contributions to the insurance program. The cap initially in the bill was removed. The story also misstated Regan Vaughan's organization as Catholic Churches of Baltimore. Vaughan works with Catholic Charities of Baltimore.

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

BSU 2022 SPRING COMMENCEMENT

Graduation from Bowie State University is a major milestone in your life that is shared by the University Community that has been an integral part of your achievement and growth. We are excited to celebrate your hard work and perseverance Friday, May 20, 2022.

Commencement Ceremony will be held Friday, May 20, 2022, 10:00 a.m. in the Bulldog Stadium. Keynote Speaker is Jacqueline McWilliams, CIAA Commissioner is in her ninth season of serving as the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) Commissioner. She is the first female to serve as Commissioner for the CIAA and first appointed African American female Commissioner representing Division I, II or III of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA).

Ms. McWilliams spent nine years at the NCAA managing national championships to include both the men's and women's Division I basketball tournaments. She started her career in coaching, compliance and administration at Virginia Union University followed by a career growth opportunities at the CIAA, Norfolk State University and Morgan State prior to the NCAA.

She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology from Hampton University and a Master of Arts in sports management and administration from Temple University. She was a two-sport athlete at Hampton University 1988 NCAA Division II Women's Basketball Championship team and freshman Player of the Year. In 1990 she was named Player of the Year for CIAA Volleyball.

Ms. McWilliams was selected as a member of the 2013 class for Women in Sports Business Journal Game Changer. She was inducted into the Hampton University Hall of Fame, Temple University's Gallery of Success, and the Sierra High School Hall of Fame.

She is the past president for Women Leaders in College Sports (2019-2020) and current member of the board. She serves on the board of directors for the John B. McLendon Scholarship Foundation, Samaritans Feet International and the NCAA Gender Equity Task Force. Additionally, she served as the chair of NCAA DII Management Council, a member of the NCAA Board of Governors and NCAA Cultural Diversity Committee.

Ms. McWilliams is a woman of faith, motivational speaker, and an active member of the Charlotte Crown Jewels Links Chapter of Charlotte. She has received numerous awards for her leadership and contributions to the community.

CONGRATULATIONS

A message from Bowie State University President April 1, 2022. Congratulating Paige Blake on Appointment to White House Board of Advisors. "I am excited to share news about the appointment of our very own Paige Blake, a junior biology major, as the only student named to President Joe Biden's Board of Advisors on Historically Black Colleges and Univer-

sities. Her appointment comes after being named a 2021 HBCU Competitiveness Scholar by the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities."

"The addition of a student voice provides a unique perspective as the Board continues its work towards the HBCU Initiative's goal of increasing the capacity of historically Black institutions to provide a quality education and other life changing opportunities."

"Paige is on the pre-med track and plans to attend medical school to study neurology. Her goal is to serve others with neurological conditions. Please join me in congratulating Paige." Contact: webmaster@bowiestate.edu.

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

Happy Birthday to Janet Barber, Reginald Johnson, Catherine Brooks, DeLarenta Lee, Taniya Cole, Joyce Lee, Louise Contee, Joseph Lewis, Audrey Davis, Lillian Makle, Lawrence Dorsey, II, Mildred Makle, Lawrence Dorsey, III, Wanda Makle, Freda Farmer, Wendell Pinkney, Dominique Hardy, Zilpha Pinkney, Lula Hawkins, Janice Watkins, Princess Johnson, and Delonte Young.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

Congratulations to Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Cooper who are members of Christ United Methodist Church Aquasco, Maryland.

CONGRATULATIONS

Women's day weekend was enlightening and engaging. A special thanks to the committee and congratulations to the two Women of the Year recipients, Mrs. Lillian Makle, member of Christ United Methodist Church and Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton, member of Nottingham Myers Church.

BLACK AND PROUD

Black and Proud+ is a community art exhibit Saturday, April 16 all day. This exhibit curated by the PGMLS Black History and Culture team and LGBTQ+ Team. Works range from poetry to portraits and celebrate the strength and courage of Black Americans.

The exhibit will be on display at Hyattsville through May 31, 2022. Featured artists include: Ny'Lah Green (Student, Suitland High School), Live 'N' Tune (Artist, Upper Marlboro), MotherPat (Artist, Cheverly), Shaymar Higgs (Artist, Upper Marlboro), Leigh Marget (Artist and former PGCPD Educator, Laurel), Jasmine Lee (Student, Suitland High School, and Rae Akino (Artist, Prince George's County Native).

The exhibit is open during branch hours. Hyattsville Branch Library is open Monday 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Tuesday-Wednesday 12-8 p.m., Thursday-Friday 10 am.-6 p.m., and Saturday 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Age Group: Teen (13-18) Elementary (5-12 yrs.), Adults. Event Type: LGBTQ+ Fine Arts and Crafts, Black Heritage. TAGS: Please submit accessibility requests at least 72 hours in advance of the event by emailing pr@pgcmls.info.

COMMUNITY



mulchmadness
DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

**SATURDAY
APRIL 23**

Prince George's County Organics Composting Facility
6550 Maude Savoy Brown Rd.,
Upper Marlboro, MD
(From Crain Highway, proceed on Maude Savoy Brown Road to Facility)

*Public restrooms are not available.

8 am to 1 pm
or while supplies last

Source Reduction Tip:
Reduce water usage, prevent soil erosion, and reduce the use of herbicides in your home gardens by applying mulch.

- The event is for County residents only, proof of residency may be required.
- All attendees are encouraged to wear a face covering and follow social distancing guidelines.
- Self-loaders must bring their own shovels, pitch forks, bags, containers and/or tarps to secure/transport the material.
- Only non-commercial vehicles, 3/4-ton maximum weight are permitted. No business vehicle signage will be permitted, all commercial signs should be covered or removed prior to entering the site.

For more information, visit mypgc.us/mulchmadness

This mulch is primarily derived from the Christmas tree collections.





Maryland Drivers Criticize Upcoming End To Gas Tax Holiday

By STEPHEN NEUKAM and E.A. BREEDEN
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS (April 8, 2022)— Maryland drivers will not get extended relief at the gas pump after Republican attempts to extend the state's one month gas tax holiday through Memorial Day failed Thursday (April 7) after House Democrats rejected the move.

The average price of gas in Maryland has fallen well below the national average with the 37-cent tax suspension in place, and GOP lawmakers tried to extend the tax break beyond the April 16 deadline with an amendment to a bill that would extend the state's energy storage tax credit.

According to AAA, the average price of regular gas Friday in Maryland was \$3.75 per gallon and the national average was \$4.14.

"This expires next week," House Minority Leader Jason C. Buckel, R-Allegany, said on the floor before the vote Thursday. "Does anyone in this room think that the economic conditions that existed 30 days ago are not the same as what they are today?"

"Do we think they are going to dramatically change—gas prices, inflation, fuel costs—in the next 45 days?"

The amendment to extend the suspension for another 45 days was defeated 47 to 82.

There is no plan for an extension to be considered in the Senate, according to the Senate president's Director of Communications David Schulein.

Drivers at a Royal Farms in Cecilton said Thursday they believe the gas tax cut should be extended in the state because they saw savings at the pump that helped them at a time when prices are soaring.

Kimberly Jamar, 32, a homemaker from Chestertown, said she drives an hour and a half regularly to Baltimore for medical treatment for two of her three children. She said she saved between \$200 and \$300 over the last month with the tax suspension and would support it being extended.

"I don't think it's right," Jamar said. "I think they ought to renew it, or I'm not going to be able to afford getting my children the medical care they need."

Sue Bertino, 64, from Earlville, said she has family in New Jersey that she has to take care of, and she makes the trip from her home to theirs about once a week.

"It's fantastic, because you can't afford it (the gas)," Bertino said. "I gotta watch every dime I spend."

Linda Dyekman, 73, from Chesapeake City, said because of the low prices, she knows people

who come from Delaware to get gas in Maryland, if they live close enough. Gas in Middletown, Delaware, just over 10 miles away from Cecilton, was around \$4, as opposed to \$3.70 at the Royal Farms where Dyekman had stopped.

"I'm very grateful for Gov. (Larry) Hogan, the good Republican that he is," said Dyekman, a major gift officer for the Franciscan Friars of Atonement in Garrison, N.Y. "I wish they could (extend the tax break), but I understand it was a gift at a time when they could do it."

Maryland gubernatorial hopefuls held different viewpoints of the decision not to extend the moratorium.

Comptroller Peter Franchot, the first to call for the move, has repeatedly angled for a 90-day moratorium.

"The gas tax holiday provided immediate relief to many hard-working families across the

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PHOTO BY E.A. BREEDEN/CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

Kimberly Jamar of Chestertown, who said she drives regularly to Baltimore for health care for two of her three children, said the gas tax holiday has saved her \$200 to \$300.

CITY OF HYATTSVILLE NOTICE OF A PROPOSED REAL PROPERTY TAX INCREASE

The City Council of the City of Hyattsville, Maryland proposes to increase real property taxes.

- For the tax year beginning July 1, 2022, the estimated real property assessable base will increase by 6.0%, from \$2,424,513,732 to \$2,569,213,033.
- If the City of Hyattsville maintains the current tax rate of \$0.63 per \$100 of assessment, real property tax revenues will increase by 6.0% resulting in \$911,606 of new real property tax revenues.
- In order to fully offset the effect of increasing assessments, the real property tax rate should be reduced to \$0.5945, the constant yield tax rate.
- The City is considering not reducing its real property tax rate enough to fully offset increasing assessments. The City proposes to adopt a real property tax rate of \$0.63 per \$100 of assessment. This tax rate is 6.0% higher than the constant yield tax rate and will generate \$911,606 in additional property tax revenues.

A public hearing on the proposed real property tax rate increase will be held at 6:30 p.m., on May 2, 2022. The meeting will be held remotely via video teleconference. Register in advance for this webinar: https://us06web.zoom.us/join/register/WN_4eZYwAEtSSqCG_hiTRZtoA. Meeting log in details including a phone number for audio only access will be provided upon registration. The meeting will also be broadcast on the City's cable television channel (Comcast 71, Verizon 12).

The hearing is open to the public, and public testimony is encouraged. Participants who join the video/audio conference will be enabled to speak by the meeting chair. Speakers will be allowed to address the Council for two (2) minutes. Public Comment may also be made using the e-comment feature at hyattsville.org/meetings or emailing cityclerk@hyattsville.org. All electronic comments must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. on May 2, 2022. Comments received will be read by City staff during the public comment portion of the meeting. Persons with questions regarding this hearing may call 301-985-5009 for further information.

Maryland Poised to Become the Second State to Outlaw Declawing Cats

By LOGAN HILL
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS (April 5, 2022)— Feline advocates are celebrating their legislative victory on a bill to outlaw declawing cats and urging Republican Gov. Larry Hogan to sign it.

The bill (SB67) to outlaw declawing except for specific medical reasons, won final approval in the Senate on Monday, and is now on Hogan's desk.

Alley Cat Allies founder and president, Becky Robinson, is one of the many supporters of the legislation.

"On behalf of Alley Cat Allies and our over 34,000 supporters in Maryland, we urge Governor Hogan to sign this bill and eliminate the inhumane act in Maryland once and for all," Robinson said in a statement.

With Hogan's signature, Maryland would become the second state in the country to ban the practice, following New York, which outlawed declawing in 2019. Thirteen cities, including Los Angeles, San Francisco, Denver and Pittsburgh, also have outlawed the procedure, according to information collected by Alley Cat Allies, a Bethesda-based organization that advocates for cats worldwide.

Animal rights activists celebrated the passage.

Jennifer Bevan-Dangel, Maryland state director for the Humane Society of the United States, tweeted "Victory" to her followers.

"MD will become 2nd state to ban cruel practice of cat #declaw this #MDGA22. Getting it



JOE RYAN/CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

Ginny Boveington, outside her house in Crofton with cat "Cleo," is the administrator for the 200-member Facebook group Maryland Tortie Cat Club and a strong proponent of the bill to outlaw declawing cats.

done for the #HumaneAgenda Thank you @CherylKagan and @LCharkoudian for your leadership!"

Sen. Cheryl Kagan, D-Montgomery, and Del. Lorig Charkoudian, D-Montgomery, were the lead sponsors for the bill in their respective houses.

Show Your Soft Side, a public service campaign that advocates against animal abuse across the nation, expressed similar sentiments.

"VICTORY! Thank you, bill sponsors Senator @CherylKagan and Delegate @LCharkoudian, and EVERYONE who helped MD pass a historic and humane ban on declawing cats. Just one step left: @GovLarryHogan's desk. Soft Side spokescat Bugs knows he can count on our pet-loving Governor," the campaign tweeted on Monday.

Many cat owners declaw their cats for a variety of reasons, in-

cluding fear of injury or protection of furniture. Kagan argued during Senate floor debates that declawing cats was cruel and inhumane. Veterinarians and others testified during hearings that the process was the equivalent of removing a person's finger to the first knuckle.

"A lot of people don't realize it can be harmful to the cat," Kagan said. "It's almost like cutting off their knuckles."

The legislation did not pass without opposition. Sen. J. B. Jennings, R-Baltimore and Harford, proposed amendments to the bill that would keep some declawing practices in place.

"I mean, cats are cats, man," Jennings said during a floor debate in February. "They're not a dog. They're tough. They have their own mind. They'll do their own thing."

Jennings' amendments failed.

Request For Expressions of Interest

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COMMENTARY

Marc Morial

President and CEO, National Urban League



To Be Equal:

National Urban League's 2022 State of Black America Report Illuminates the Plot to Destroy Democracy

Civic Engagement & Voter Education Campaign, "Reclaim Your Vote," Relaunches with Report's Release

"The lessons of history are clear: when elected officials have to take a stand, when they have to go on record and show the American people where they are on the issues, then the right side of history ultimately prevails. I believe the same will hold true in this fight to protect our Democracy. The forces that oppose democracy today are strong, but as we've seen in recent history, the resolve of the American people is stronger."

—Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, 2022 State of Black America

Gerrymandering. Voter suppression. Malicious misinformation. Intimidation.

Politicians have used these tactics for generations to exclude voters of color and to give their parties an edge. But never before has the nation seen such an insidious and coordinated campaign to obliterate the very principle of "one person, one vote" from the political process.

On Tuesday, April 12, the National Urban League's 2022 State of Black America® report, "Under Siege: The Plot to Destroy Democracy," reveals the extent of this campaign. In response, the National Urban League is relaunching its highly-effective civic engagement and voter education campaign, "Reclaim Your Vote."

Using data and analysis from our research partner, The Brennan Center for Justice, the State of Black America examines the astonishing reversal of a two-century moral arc that has bent, if slowly and un-

evenly, toward universal suffrage.

From the adoption of the U.S. Constitution in 1787, when only land-owning white men could vote, to passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965, the United States has seen a steady, if unevenly enforced, expansion of the franchise. By 1856 property ownership requirements were eliminated in all states, giving suffrage to most white men. The 15th Amendment, ratified in 1870, guaranteed Black Americans the right to vote, though the rise of Jim Crow restrictions like poll taxes and literacy tests effectively disenfranchised Southern Blacks for most of the next century. The 19th Amendment in 1920 extended the franchise to women—in practice only white women—until the Voting Rights Act outlawed most Jim Crow restrictions.

Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act prohibited states and counties with a history of voter suppression from making changes to voting laws until "favorable determination" had been obtained, either through administrative review by the Attorney General, or after a lawsuit before the United States District Court for the District of Columbia. By overwhelming bipartisan majorities, Congress reauthorized the preclearance provision four times—in 1970, 1975, 1982, and 2006, each time signed by a Republican president. "Republicans don't want to be branded as hostile to minorities," groused anti-civil rights activist Edward Blum, an architect of the Shelby case.

Thus, anti-civil rights activists abandoned hope of Congressional action to weaken the Voting Rights Act and turned to the courts. The earthquake that was Shelby was preceded by foreshocks like 2006's *Purcell v. Gonzalez*, which allowed Arizona to circumvent Section 5 because the Court of Appeals de-

cision to block Arizona's restrictive voter ID law came too close to an upcoming election. Crawford v. Marion County Election Board in 2008, which allowed Indiana to enact a strict voter I.D. law, reversed the Court's longstanding opposition to voting laws that serve no purpose other than to restrict the franchise.

A decade and a half after the last reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act, Senate Republicans—some of whom voted for that reauthorization—no longer are concerned about being "branded as hostile to minorities." Republicans united to filibuster voting rights legislation five times in the current session alone, despite the fact that seven in ten Americans support the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act and three in five support the Freedom to Vote Act.

The report [was] released Tuesday at Atlanta University Center in Georgia, a state that has been ground zero for the tactics discussed in the report. Just this week, Georgia lawmakers passed a bill that would give new election policing powers to the state's bureau of investigation—yet another attempt to intimidate election workers and voters.

The report also will reveal the 2022 Equality Index™, the National Urban League's semi-annual calculation of the social and economic status of African Americans relative to whites. And, for the first time, For the first time, State of Black America includes a companion poll, the Pulse of Black America. Conducted by Benenson Strategy Group, the survey reveals Black Americans' attitudes toward voting and democracy, as well as social and racial justice, police violence, economic opportunity and other issues.

The full report [is] available April 12 at StateOfBlackAmerica.org.

Marion Wright Edelman

President Emerita, Children's Defense Fund



ChildWatch:

"A Morally Inclement Climate"

April 4 was the 54th anniversary of the assassination of our nation's prophet of nonviolence, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. On the same day we received new warnings from international scientists that our world remains headed towards an environmental climate catastrophe, this date was a sad reminder that before his death, Dr. King presciently warned us about a metaphorical climate crisis that also threatened us all.

Shortly after President John F. Kennedy's 1963 assassination, Dr. King wrote that it was time for our nation to do some soul-searching, and while the question "Who killed President Kennedy?" was important, answering the question "What killed President Kennedy?" was even more critical. Dr. King said he

believed "our late President was assassinated by a morally inclement climate": "It is a climate filled with heavy torrents of false accusation, jostling winds of hatred, and raging storms of violence. It is a climate where men cannot disagree without being disagreeable, and where they express dissent through violence and murder. It is the same climate that murdered Medgar Evers in Mississippi and six innocent Negro children in Birmingham, Alabama."

Dr. King also noted that the undercurrents of hatred and violence that made up this morally inclement climate were fueled by our cultural embrace of guns: "By our readiness to allow arms to be purchased at will and fired at whim, by allowing our movie and tel-

evision screens to teach our children that the hero is one who masters the art of shooting and the technique of killing, by allowing all these developments, we have created an atmosphere in which violence and hatred have become popular pastimes."

The same winds of hatred, storms of violence, and easy access to and glorification of guns he believed killed President Kennedy would soon kill Dr. King too. Decades later, we are still being ravaged by the same storms. On April 3, six people were killed and 12 others injured in a shooting in downtown Sacramento, California, one of the worst mass shootings in the city's history. Afterwards, President Biden released a statement: "Today, America once again mourns for another community devastated by gun violence . . . Families forever changed. Survivors left to heal wounds both visible and invisible . . . We know these lives were not the only lives impacted by gun violence last night. And we equally mourn for those victims and families who do not make national headlines. But we must do more than mourn; we must act."

Will we? President Biden went on to list steps Congress could take to curb gun violence right now: "Ban ghost guns. Require background checks for all gun sales. Ban assault weapons and high-capacity magazines. Repeal gun manufacturers' immunity from liability." We know what could help. But we also know

how many members of Congress remain resistant to doing anything at all. Meanwhile, gun violence is now the leading cause of death for children and teens ages 0-19 and is taking a growing number of lives—a fact that is sometimes lost in the middle of the pandemic. Violence still saturates our communities and our culture. We are raising another generation in a morally inclement climate. We must do more than mourn. We must put actions behind our words and thoughts and prayers.

In his eulogy at Dr. King's funeral, Dr. Benjamin E. Mays said: "Here was a man who believed with all of his might that the pursuit of violence at any time is ethically and morally wrong; that God and the moral weight of the universe are against it; that violence is self-defeating; and that only love and forgiveness can break the vicious circle of revenge. He believed that nonviolence would prove effective in the abolition of injustice in politics, in economics, in education, and in race relations. He was convinced, also, that people could not be moved to abolish voluntarily the inhumanity of man to man by mere persuasion and pleading, but that they could be moved to do so by dramatizing the evil through massive nonviolent resistance . . . He believed that the nonviolent approach to solving social problems would ultimately prove to be redemptive." Our world is still in desperate need of leaders who share this belief today.

Hoyer Applauds Fifth District Leaders on Appointments to the President's HBCU Board of Advisors

WASHINGTON (April 1, 2022)—Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-05) released the following statement today after Dr. Monica Goldson, Chief Executive Officer for Prince George's County Public Schools and Paige Blake, Prince George's County native and a Junior at Bowie State University, were appointed to serve on President Biden's HBCU Board of Advisors:

"With the appointment of Dr. Monica Goldson and Paige Blake, the President has selected two impressive and talented individuals to serve on his HBCU Board of Advisors," said Congressman Hoyer. "This important announcement comes at a critical time for HBCUs in our country; we must address the every day challenges and barriers that have historically burdened our HBCUs, such as underfunding and lack of equal opportunity for students. We can do this by ensuring that they have the tools and resources they need to set young learners up for success and by supporting the mission of their campuses to the fullest extent. We must also condemn bigotry and racism in our country. The alarming and unacceptable bomb threats that targeted HBCUs at the beginning

of the year are a testament to this challenge, and together, we ought to do everything possible to promote the safety and security of HBCU students.

"I know that Dr. Goldson and Ms. Blake will be expert advocates on behalf of our community and Fifth District HBCUs in this moment we are in, and I join in congratulating them on their appointments."

For more information on this Board of Advisors, visit <https://www.whitehouse.gov/>. The White House has provided bios for Dr. Monica Goldson and Paige Blake:

Monica Goldson

Dr. Monica Goldson, Chief Executive Officer for Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS), is the dedicated and dynamic leader of the 20th largest school district in the nation. A three-time HBCU graduate, she is committed to creating transformative experiences that propel students to their highest levels of excellence. Dr. Goldson focuses on doing what is best for students and educators, especially amid the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Her longtime advocacy for public education was key in mobilizing

the PGCPS community to provide laptops, internet service and technology assistance to families in need while building virtual learning from the ground up. Beyond the schoolhouse, she is a member of Chiefs for Change, a graduate of Leadership Greater Washington, and a board member of Nonprofit Prince George's and the Prince George's Chamber of Commerce. Dr. Goldson holds a bachelor's degree in Mathematics from Florida A&M University, a master's degree in Elementary and Secondary School Administration from Bowie State University, and a doctorate in Educational Administration and Policy from Howard University. She has two adult sons, both graduates of Prince George's County Public Schools.

Paige Blake

Paige Blake is a 20-year-old native of Prince George's County, Maryland. She is a junior at Bowie State University where she majors in Biology and is on the pre-med track. Paige plans to attend medical school to study Neurology to help others with Spina Bifida and other neurological conditions. Paige was diagnosed at age 4 with a rare form of Sacral Agenesis (a

form of Spina Bifida). Over time she's learned the importance of advocacy after having her own share of hardships in her life with her disability. Paige has used her personal experiences to advocate and help others in various ways, such as organizing donation drives with her Girl Scout troop where they sent medical supplies to countries overseas and working with The Congressional Black Caucus and President Obama's White House Initiative on African American Excellence to advocate for disabled students. Currently, Paige has been named the 2021-2022 White House Initiative HBCU Competitiveness Scholar for Bowie State University. She also is working with The University System of Maryland Student Council as the Director of Student Affairs, where she advocates for students to ensure that present and future college students in the state of Maryland will have positive and equal opportunities.

Hoyer Statement on the Retirement of Elizabeth Hewlett as Head of the Prince George's Planning Board

WASHINGTON (April 1, 2022)—Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-05) released the following statement after Elizabeth "Betty" Hewlett retired as head of the Prince George's Planning Board:

"Few Prince Georgians have made such a tremendous impact in our community like my dear friend Betty Hewlett. It has been a privilege to serve alongside Betty for close to three decades. I've witnessed first-hand how much she cares for not just Prince George's County, but for making a positive difference in the lives of our people. For over two decades, Betty has devoted herself to public service in Prince George's County with great talent and steadfast commitment

to our priorities. As the first African American woman and first woman to Chair the Prince George's County Planning Board of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Betty has done an outstanding job managing thousands of employees, a police department, and the land-use and development of land for the benefit of residents in the Fifth District and Maryland. It was under her leadership that the Planning Board received six Gold Medals for excellence in parks and recreation management—the only agency to hold that many awards in the nation. She has led the agency to countless other awards and heightened the standard of service for others to follow.

"Betty has also played an integral role in orchestrating my annual Black History Month Breakfast, helping to bring leaders and members of our community together to celebrate Black history and acknowledge the work that must be done in the fight for justice and equality. She has been a fighter for diversity in Prince George's County, and continually advocated for more Black women in our government and in doing so, has become a mentor figure to so many young women who reflect her spirit to make change and lead with purpose. I thank Betty for being a fierce champion for the needs of Prince George's County and its residents and I wish her a joyful retirement in the years to come."

The Prince George's Post

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Partners from A1

team is helping myself and Be The Match find my match to see if I can find a lifesaving transplant to cure myself of the sickle cell disease," said Smith Owens. "I am really excited to see everyone come out today and hopefully if we do not find a match for me, we can find a match for someone else that has either blood cancer or any type of blood disorder."

Be The Match is operated by the National Marrow Donor Program and helps patients receive life-saving transplants. They are dedicated to raising awareness and funds needed to help all patients get the transplant they need. Be The Match focuses on finding potential donors ages 18-44, so it is critical that they register as many college students as possible. Their research shows that younger donors are best for patients because they provide the greatest chance for transplant success. Donors between the ages of 18 and 44 are asked to donate more than 90% of the time.

Every year, thousands of people of all ages are diagnosed with blood cancers like leukemia or lymphoma, sickle cell anemia or other life-threatening diseases. Many of them will not survive unless they get a bone marrow or cord blood transplant from a matching donor. 70-percent of people do not have a donor in their family and depend on the Be The Match registry to find a match and save their life. Because tissue types are inherited, patients are most likely to match someone of their own race or ethnicity. Registry members of diverse racial and ethnic ancestry are especially needed, so every patient has the chance for a cure.

"Ms. Kayla was diagnosed with sickle cell and this is something that is near and dear to me as I have a few family members that's in the fight as well," added Wilson. "Hopefully with the overwhelming response from our athletes and the campus community, we will be able to assist someone in need."

For those interested in helping find a match, join the Be The Match Registry. All it takes is a simple cheek swab. Text "BOWIESAVES" to 61474 to save a life or my.bethmatch.org/bowiesaves.

For the most up-to-date information on Bowie State University Athletics and its 13 varsity sports teams, please visit www.bsbulldogs.com.

Historic from A1

Building: "It's a statement that on our highest court in the land, we want to make sure that there is going to be full representation and the finest and brightest and the best. That's what happened today. I'm very proud."

Biden nominated Jackson on Feb. 25 after Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer announced his plans to retire at the end of the current session, which is expected to be in June or early July. Jackson's confirmation fulfilled a Biden campaign promise that he would appoint the first Black woman to the Supreme Court.

Jackson currently serves as a federal judge on the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. She previously served as a district judge for the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, the vice-chair of the United States Sentencing Commission, and was a clerk for Breyer. She will also be the first public defender to be appointed to the Supreme Court.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-New York, said in a press conference after the vote that Jackson's confirmation was "a long, hard road as we tried to get to greater equality, less bigotry in America."

He added: "It was often steps backward. But when you have a day like this, it inspires you to keep moving forward. There's no better group to have us move forward than this group."

Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Illinois, who chairs the Senate Judiciary Committee, acknowledged the Republican senators that voted along with the Democrats.

"I can't say enough for my three colleagues," he said. "I held out the hope that at the last minute, several others

would join them (and) realize they won't be on the right side of history this morning. We've got to continue to work to build bipartisanship."

An emotional Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vermont, told reporters that in Jackson, "I see somebody extraordinarily well-qualified, somebody who makes the court look more like America. Frankly, I could say to my children and my grandchildren, 'Be proud. Be proud of what you see.'"

Both of Maryland's senators, Democrats Ben Cardin and Chris Van Hollen, voted for Jackson. After the vote, Van Hollen tweeted: "With today's vote, both Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson and the Senate made history... Like Marylander Thurgood Marshall before her, Judge Jackson is a trailblazer, & I know she will uphold equal justice under the law."

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Kentucky, has repeatedly attacked Jackson and those who supported her. In Thursday floor remarks, McConnell said the soon-to-be-justice had two choices: "Either satisfy her radical fan club or help preserve the judiciary that Americans need."

McConnell added, "I'm afraid the nominee's record tells us which is likely. But I hope Judge Jackson proves me wrong."

Before the final vote itself, the Senate public galleries overlooking the floor filled with members of the Congressional Black Caucus. In an earlier Twitter post, some caucus members in black t-shirts reading "Black Women are Supreme."

The final tally was delayed nearly 25 minutes by Sen. Rand Paul, R-Kentucky, who did not join the full Senate chamber for the vote. Finally, the casu-



TATYANA MONNAY/CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON—Vice President Kamala Harris talks to reporters Thursday in the United States Capitol after presiding over the Senate's confirmation of Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson as a Supreme Court justice. She will be the first Black woman to serve on the nation's highest court.

ally-dressed Paul (whose attire violated Senate floor rules) peeked out from a door to give his thumbs-down "no" vote.

After Harris announced the vote, the senators supporting Jackson and people in the gallery stood and flooded the chamber with approximately 30 seconds of thunderous applause.

Most Republicans walked out during the applause, solemn-faced.

On Friday, Biden and Harris are scheduled to host a celebratory event with Jackson at the White House.

Capital News Service reporter Tatyana Monnay contributed to this story.

Morningside from A2

long career with the federal government, died March 29. She was retired as Lead Secretary to the Administrator for the National Agricultural Statistics Service, Dept. of Agriculture. She was a graduate of Eastern High School and lived for a time in Suitland to care for her aging parents. Her husband Frederick Hoffman predeceased her. They lived in Waldorf and White Plains before moving

to Williamsburg, Va.

- Charles M. Galbreath, 73, founder and senior pastor of Bowie New Life Assembly Church in Upper Marlboro, died Dec. 31, 2021.

Milestones

Happy birthday to Tara Destiny Proctor and Edna Ducote, April 16; Eloise Carnes, Ruby Cunningham and Veronica Frostbutter, April 17; Cameron Trexler, April 19; Devaughn Branham, April 20; Jill Gilmartin

Booth and Tiffany Jackson, April 21; and Taylor Foster, April 22.

Happy anniversary to Edward and Jane (Martin) Talbert on their 73rd anniversary April 16; Larry and Jody (Bowman) Nyers, their 42nd on April 18; Jim and Pat Conlon, their 48th on April 20; John and Ruth Anthony Jr., their 44th on April 22; and Lewis and Trisha (Pitts) Woods, their 33rd on April 22.

I wish a Beautiful Easter for all of you!



Here to **changeUP women's health in Prince George's County.**

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Maryland Cancer Moonshot: Governor Hogan Breaks Ground on First-Ever Comprehensive Cancer Center in Prince George's County

Part of Far-Reaching Initiative To Expand and Accelerate Cancer Detection, Screening, Prevention, Treatment, and Research

Highlights State's Commitment to Blue Line Corridor Economic Development Project, Progress on Bringing FBI Headquarters to Maryland

By SHAREESE CHURCHILL
Office of the Governor

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (April 7, 2022)—Governor Larry Hogan today broke ground on the first-ever comprehensive cancer center in Prince George's County, which is part of a new Maryland Cancer Moonshot Initiative to expand and accelerate cancer detection, screening, prevention, treatment, and research in the state.

Expected to open in 2024, the center will be located at the site of the newly-opened University of Maryland Capital Region Medical Center in Largo. It will provide high-quality comprehensive cancer care services—initially focused on breast, colorectal, lung, and prostate cancers—provide greater access to cancer screenings, and expand life-saving clinical trials into the county for the first time.

"This is very near and dear to my heart, because I know just how difficult it is to get that life-altering diagnosis and to experience that feeling of not knowing what comes next," said Governor Hogan. "With the completion of this new cancer center, the neighborhoods where I grew up and spent much of my life—Landover, Capitol Heights, Largo, Upper Marlboro, and all of Prince George's County—will be able to receive the high-quality cancer treatment and medical care that they deserve right

here, where they will have access to some of the best doctors, nurses, and health care professionals in the world."

As part of the Maryland Cancer Moonshot, the state is committing \$67 million to fully fund the construction of this new cancer center.

"Taking a multidisciplinary approach to address incidence of cancer is key and UM Capital will have a significant impact on the community—creating a one-stop destination to provide coordinated care with expertise and compassion," said Mohan Suntha, MD, MBA, President & CEO of the University of Maryland Medical System. "We will build on the success we have seen at the University of Maryland Greenebaum Comprehensive Cancer Center in Baltimore City, as well as other parts of Maryland, where UMMS hospitals are front and center in providing the highest quality care through the UM Cancer Network."

The moonshot initiative also calls for: **Greenebaum Cancer Center:** \$100 million for the expansion of the University of Maryland Marlene and Stewart Greenebaum Comprehensive Cancer Center in downtown Baltimore to provide state-of-the-art inpatient and outpatient cancer services.

Cancer Research: \$25 million for the University of Maryland School of Medi-

cine and Johns Hopkins University to accelerate cancer research projects.

Pediatric Cancer Research: \$1 million to support expanding pediatric cancer research at the University of Maryland School of Medicine.

Stem Cell Research Fund: \$20.5 million for the Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund to catalyze investment in regenerative medicine projects to develop novel cures and groundbreaking treatments for prevalent cancers.

Maryland Tech Council: \$2.5 million for the BioHub Maryland Initiative to expand the state's life sciences and biotechnology research workforce, with a focus on talent development, upskilling opportunities, and outreach to students in underserved communities.

Blue Line Corridor and FBI Headquarters. Also today, Governor Hogan touted the state's commitment, in partnership with Prince George's County Executive Angela Alsobrooks, to move forward with a \$400 million investment in the Blue Line Corridor economic development project, and touted the progress the state is making to bring the FBI's new headquarters to Prince George's County. The Blue Line Corridor funding is currently under consideration in the General Assembly.



CREDIT: ANNA SHVETS, PEXELS

Waste from disposable personal protective equipment is piling up. What can be done about making and using more sustainable forms of PPE?

Earth TALK™ We Need Sustainable PPE!

Dear EarthTalk:

I've heard that PPE waste is a growing environmental burden these days. Is anyone working on ways to solve this problem?

—B. Jackson, Jewett City, MD

From healthcare workers and teachers, grocery clerks and students, no one has escaped the increased need for personal protective equipment (PPE) the past two years. Though inarguably a critical agent in preventing the spread of disease, PPE has inadvertently created a new "shadow pandemic"—billions of these single-use items now line streets and parking lots and pollute oceans. Globally, it is estimated that 129 billion facemasks and 65 million pairs of gloves are disposed of each month. "Other than burning [PPE], there is really nothing we can do," says Sander Defruyt, head of the plastics team at the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, a charity aimed at eliminating waste and pollution. "It's designed to be waste."

The issue isn't PPE itself; it's single-use PPE made from non-reusable materials. Designed to be leak-proof and tear-resistant, disposable PPE can't be washed and reused, since the cleaning process would compromise the protective integrity. Deepening an already astounding waste mismanagement problem, these throw-away items end up as potentially contaminated pollution simply because they have to.

Luckily, the problem has not gone unnoticed. In the medical community, the case for reusable PPE has gained traction as institutions have developed methods and materials to lengthen the life-cycle of protective gear. Burlington Medical, a maker of durable, reusable medical garments, increased production of their healthcare clothing supplies by 500 percent during the pandemic. They use sustainable materials in their process and operate an on-site medical laundry facility to sterilize PPE. Studies on mask filtration by the Nonwovens Institute (NWI) at North Carolina State led to a partnership with NatureWorks to develop new technology that allows for mask reuse even after chemical cleaning. Globally, companies are testing science-backed efforts to improve mask viability without compromising safety.

Those outside the medical community have access to a variety of sustainable PPE options. French company Geochanvre makes 100 percent biodegradable face masks from hemp, including a recyclable band. Change Plastic for Good developed an additive to make plastic biodegradable, now used to create masks, and MEDU Protection offers washable medical PPE that can be returned for disinfecting and conversion into scrubs and bags. EcoGreen Communities offers compostable face masks, reusable gloves and reduced carbon medical aprons.

The most sustainable option is undoubtedly reusable PPE, but the use of plastic and other disposable protective gear isn't going away anytime soon. Rather than tossing in the garbage, there is a way to recycle some of these items. TerraCycle offers paid recycling services that collect, inspect and repurpose PPE through a detailed process available through their website, and Thermal Compaction Group (TCG) out of Wales has developed a process that re-engineers specific PPE to resell to the plastics industry.

"Plastics are not the problem; the way the human race discards plastic remains the issue," says Tim Hourahine, compliance manager at TCG. With PPE becoming part of our daily routine, we have alternative solutions to sustain both our health and the environment.

CONTACTS: Specialty Fabrics Review, specialtyfabricsreview.com/2020/11/01/the-pandemic-is-driving-more-sustainable-ppe/; Startup Makes Biodegradable Face Mask - Planet Home, planethome.eco/planet-friendly-ppe/; TerraCycle, terraCycle.com/en-US/pages/ppe-recycling.

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New Report: Transition to Zero-Emission Vehicles Would Save 149 District of Columbia Lives, Generate Nearly 2 Billion in Public Health Benefits

American Lung Association's "Zeroing in on Healthy Air" report details benefits of transition to zero-emission transportation for District residents

By VALERIE GLEASON
American Lung Association

WASHINGTON (March 30, 2022)—A nationwide transition to clean, zero-emission vehicles would have a dramatic impact on the air quality and health of District residents, according to a new report by the American Lung Association. The "Zeroing in on Healthy Air" report, released today, reveals that a widespread transition to vehicles powered by clean electricity generation would result in up to 149 avoided deaths and \$1.7 billion in public health benefits here in the District. In fact, the Washington-Baltimore-Arlington, DC-MD-VA-WV-PA metro area is ranked as sixth in the top 25 metro areas that would benefit the most from the transition.

"Zeroing in on Healthy Air" outlines the broad benefits of the transition to a zero-emission transportation sector over the coming decades. The report illustrates the potential health and climate benefits if all new passenger vehicles sold are zero-emission by 2035 and all new trucks and buses sold are zero-emission by 2040. The report projects that the nation's electric grid will be powered by clean, non-combustion electricity replacing dirty fossil fuels by 2035.

Nationally, a widespread transition to electric vehicles powered by clean electricity would generate more than \$1.2 trillion in health benefits and \$1.7 trillion in additional climate benefits by 2050. Here in the District the transition would generate \$1.7 billion in public health benefits and result in up to:

- 149 avoided deaths
- 5,680 avoided asthma attacks
- 36,400 avoided lost workdays

In the Washington-Baltimore-Arlington, DC-MD-VA-WV-PA metro area the transition would generate 38.9 billion in public health benefits and result in up to:

- 3,540 avoided deaths
- 104,000 avoided asthma attacks
- 516,000 avoided lost workdays

"The transportation sector is a leading contributor to air pollution and climate change," said Aleks Casper, Advocacy Director at the American Lung Association. "Thankfully, the technologies and systems are in place to make these benefits a reality, especially in communities most impacted by harmful pollution today. We need our state leaders to act to implement equitable policies and invest in the transition to healthy air today. This is an urgent health issue for millions of people in the U.S. Especially as the District faces the impacts of climate change such as more extreme weather, hotter temperatures, increased rainfall and long-term rising of the Potomac River resulting in more frequent and worsening flooding, this is a powerful and practical opportunity to take action to improve our economy, our health and our future."

Climate change threatens the health of all Americans, from wildfires and extreme storms to worsening air pollution. And poor air quality caused by transportation and electricity generation contributes to a wide range of negative health impacts, including childhood asthma attacks, impaired lung

function and development, lung cancer, heart attacks, strokes and premature deaths. These are sources of health disparities in lower-income communities and communities of color, both in terms of exposure to harmful air and the associated health consequences.

Achieving these major benefits to our health and our climate will require dedicated and sustained leadership. Investment at all levels of government, and public education and engagement will ensure the transition to zero-emission vehicles provides clean air for everyone. The American Lung Association is asking the public to sign our petition calling for more rapid transition to zero-emission vehicles and energy at Lung.org/EV.

For more information about "Zeroing in on Healthy Air," visit Lung.org/EV.

The American Lung Association is the leading organization working to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease through education, advocacy and research. The work of the American Lung Association is focused on four strategic imperatives: to defeat lung cancer; to champion clean air for all; to improve the quality of life for those with lung disease and their families; and to create a tobacco-free future. For more information about the American Lung Association, a holder of the coveted 4-star rating from Charity Navigator and a Gold-Level GuideStar Member, or to support the work it does, call 1-800-LUNGUSA (1-800-586-4872) or visit: Lung.org.

WSSC WATER RELEASES 2021 WATER QUALITY REPORT Annual Report Highlights Relentless Pursuit of Safe, Clean Drinking Water

Maryland's Largest Water Utility Continues Streak: 103-Plus Years Without a Single Drinking Water Quality Violation

By PRESS OFFICER
WSSC Water

LAUREL, Md. (April 1, 2022)—WSSC Water today released its 2021 Water Quality Report, which provides customers with impor-

tant information about the source of their drinking water, how it is purified and detailed water quality data. The report highlights WSSC Water's passion for protecting public health, with zero drinking water quality violations in the util-

ity's 103-plus-year history.

"The world has changed due to COVID-19. While adjusting to a new normal may take time, one constant did not change: our commitment to delivering safe, clean and reliable water to our cus-

tomers' taps," said WSSC Water General Manager and CEO Carla A. Reid.

To guarantee water quality, WSSC Water consistently performs more than 500,000 water quality tests at its water filtration plants and 88 locations in communities throughout Montgomery and Prince George's counties. WSSC Water treats surface water from the Patuxent and Potomac rivers, and their Patuxent and Potomac Water Filtration Plants provide an average of 164 million gallons of safe drinking

water each day.

The report details important water quality topics, including:

- Drinking water sources and watershed protection efforts;
- Information on how and why water is tested;
- Detailed water quality data, including the filtration process, explained; and
- Efforts to save money and generate revenue through innovation.

Also included in the report is information on financial assistance programs, such as the Water

Fund, to help make water/sewer bills more affordable. WSSC Water's Fiscal Year 2023 budget includes \$3.5 million—a \$200,000 increase from the current budget—to enhance financial assistance programs.

The 2021 Water Quality Report is available online at wsscwater.com/wqr. Customers may also request a hard copy of the report by calling WSSC Water's Communications and Community Relations Office at 301-206-8100 or emailing communications@wsscwater.com.

BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Realtors® Recognize Excellence In Sales Production

By ERICA KALEDA
PGCAR

LANDOVER, Md. (April 4, 2022)—On Thursday, March 31, 2022, the Prince George's County Association of REALTORS® (PGCAR) recognized its "Top Producer" REALTOR® members for their 2021 sales production.

This year's Virtual Awards Ceremony was aired live on Facebook (<https://fb.watch/caTj4cfn5Y/>). The 2022 Awards Showcase is the Association's premier recognition of outstanding agent performance for the calendar year 2021.

Over 260 County REALTORS® received awards recognizing their "personal best" in sales production. PGCAR members watched online to celebrate the winners.

Taking home the top prize of the evening, First Place Platinum

Individual General Brokerage, was Hazel Shakur of REDFIN, with \$68.5 million in sales activity. Placing first in the Platinum Team Competition was The Franklin-Anderson Group of Long and Foster Real Estate with \$51 million in team sales production.

James Wendall Willard of Keller Williams Preferred Properties was awarded 2021 ROOKIE OF THE YEAR with the Highest Dollar Volume, \$1.5 million and Highest Transaction Volume for his first year of real estate.

The 2021 REALTOR OF THE YEAR title was awarded to Shameeka Price, of Capital Structures Real Estate, for her significant business-accomplishments, faithfulness to the REALTOR® Code of Ethics, leadership, civic and community involvement, as

well as local, state and National Association activity.

In recognition of her dedicated long-standing service to PGCAR and the real estate industry, REALTOR® Yolanda Muckle with Long & Foster Real Estate, was awarded the prestigious 2021 Distinguished Service award.

The Distinguished Sales Associate of the Year went to Pearl Whetzel with Boss Real Estate LLC for her dedicated and unselfish professional knowledge, her business accomplishments, her PGCAR Women's Counsel activity (Pearl is currently the Maryland State WCR President) and especially for her contribution to the Association.

John Drumgoole with New American Funding was named Affiliate of the Year in recognition of his many contributions to PGCAR in 2021.



PHOTO COURTESY OF PGCAR

Shameeka Price, 2021 Realtor of the Year

Charnise Carter, Samuel Cooper, Claudette Davis, Kenneth Fagan, Darryl Griffin-Simmons, Rachel Jefferies, Anthony Mason, Leisel Taylor, and Lisa White were recognized for their First Time Sterling "R", \$1,000 RPAC contributions.

Patricia Long with Keller Williams Preferred Properties was recognized for her First Time Golden "R", \$5,000 RPAC con-

tribution.

Thank you to our numerous sponsors who helped make the evening a resounding success.

Top Winners Included:

Individual General Brokerage - Platinum (Over \$10.5 million):

- #1. Hazel Shakur - \$68 Million
- #2. Wemmy Collins - \$37 Million

#3. Monica Bryant - \$34 Million

Team General Brokerage - Platinum (Over \$10.5 million):

- #1. The Franklin-Anderson Group, \$51 Million
- #2. The Hearst Home Team, \$41 Million
- #3. The Green Group, \$37 Million

PGCAR is the voice for REALTORS® in Prince George's County, Maryland. Representing more than 3,500 real estate professionals in the national capital area, PGCAR is an affiliate of the Maryland and National Association of REALTORS®. We are proud to serve our members and our community, and work to ensure professionalism in the industry. Our volunteers and staff work to offer services to real estate professionals and to provide avenues for our members to become more successful. We proudly work to promote and protect homeownership and private property rights.

Prince George's Community College Receives \$3.7 Million U.S. Department of Education Grant to Support Black Student Success

Five-year grant funds new summer institute offering preparation for academic courses and life skills training, along with expanded mentoring to ensure student success

By SONJI JOYNER

Prince George's Community College

LARGO, Md. (April 7, 2022)—Prince George's Community College (PGCC) has received a \$3.7 million PBI (Predominantly Black Institution) grant from the U.S. Department of Education that will expand opportunities and success for Black students. The five-year grant will fund the College's R.I.S.E. (Reach. Inspire. Success. Evolve.) Program, \$748,336 each year, through September 30, 2026.

"Student success is our highest priority here at

Prince George's Community College," said President Falecia D. Williams, Ed.D. "This grant allows us to implement a program of case management advising and support on a much larger scale than was previously possible within this institution. The impact on our Black student participants promises to be life-changing."

The purpose of the federal PBI grants awarded to Prince George's Community College and other eligible predominantly Black institutions are to plan, develop, undertake, and implement programs to enhance their capacity to serve more low- and middle-

income Black American students; expand higher education opportunities for eligible students by encouraging college preparation and student persistence in secondary school and postsecondary education; and strengthen the financial ability of the institution to serve the academic needs of their students.

At PGCC, the grant funding will support a new summer institute that will prepare Black students for success with free credit courses, including entrance exam preparation and life skills training. The grant will also enable the College to expand its two mentoring programs for Black students. The Diverse Male Student Initiatives (DMSI) program helps men focus their energy on self-improvement and prepares them for community involvement and leadership roles. The Women of Wisdom (W.O.W.) program provides opportunities for individuals who self-identify as women, enhancing their academic, personal, and professional development in a holistic environment.

"The PBI grant will support DMSI's retention efforts by increasing its capacity to serve a larger threshold of students through increased staffing, academic tutoring, and increased enrichment programming," said Program Manager Brian Hamlin.

"The W.O.W. program cultivates a safe place for women to be their authentic selves. Its framework was built on helping women overcome bar-

riers which impact their overall development," says Stephanie Pair, Ed.D., program manager. "One of the rich benefits of this grant is that it affords us the opportunity to expand personal, academic, and job-to-career resources and services for our students."

The summer institute will provide credit courses with academic and non-academic support programs. Included will be entrance exam prep instruction, life skills training, academic and career advising, coaching, and internships and apprenticeships. In addition, college tours, and various other support services will be offered to ensure that Prince George's Community College's Black students can successfully achieve their goals.

R.I.S.E. is expected to increase Black student enrollment and completion rates at Prince George's Community College as more students find greater success through the system of support, mentoring, and enrichment that it funds. For more information about the PBI Grant and R.I.S.E. program, contact rise@pgcc.edu.

The contents of this press release were developed under a grant from the Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

Statement of Kilolo Kijakazi, Acting Commissioner: Social Security Administration to Resume In-Person Services at Local Social Security Offices

Online Services and Telephone Remain Most Convenient Ways to Contact Agency

By MARK HINKLE

Social Security Administration

(April 4, 2022)—"I am pleased to announce that local Social Security offices will restore in-person services, including for people without an appointment, on April 7, 2022.

To avoid waiting in line, I strongly encourage people, who can, to use our online services at www.socialsecurity.gov, call us, and schedule appointments in advance rather than walking in without an appointment. Phone appointments can save you a trip to

a busy office. I thank the public for your patience as we work to increase service.

Customers who walk in without appointments may encounter delays and longer waits at our offices. Be aware that our offices tend to be the busiest first thing in the morning, early in the week, and during the early part of the month, so people may want to plan to visit at other times.

Given that many of the people we serve have health vulnerabilities, and consistent with our union agreements, we are continuing to require certain safety measures in-

cluding masking, physical distancing, and self-health checks for COVID-19 symptoms. We will provide masks to the public and employees if they need them.

Thoughtful planning and preparation have shaped our process to restore in-person services. Social Security employees are dedicated to serving the public, and we are ready to welcome the public back to our offices. Our local managers understand and can address the needs of their

See IN-PERSON Page A8

Gas Tax from A3

state," the Franchot campaign said in a statement. "As people are still recovering from the financial stress of the pandemic, this is an easy way for legislators to put money back into people's pockets and tangibly improve their quality of life."

Franchot sent a letter to the legislature Friday urging lawmakers to vote on an extension before the legislative session ends Monday.

Former U.S. Secretary of Education John King said he did not support an extension, arguing it is not a long-term solution, though he acknowledged it helped combat price increases temporarily.

"Unfortunately, leaders of the past like Comptroller Peter Franchot, who are supposed to work to protect Marylanders' best interests, have instead worked to keep us addicted to fossil fuels, making steps like a gas tax moratorium necessary, when sit-

uations outside of our control like the war in Ukraine arise," King said in a statement.

The campaign of Republican governor hopeful Kelly Schulz, Maryland's former secretary of Commerce, said legislators should have voted to extend the tax break and said she would work to repeal the state's automatic gas tax increase, if elected.

"With inflation at a record high, Marylanders will pay more at the pump due to this hidden tax," Schulz Communications Director Mike Demkiwe said in a statement. "As governor, Kelly Schulz will work to repeal this Inflation Tax to make our state more affordable."

Maryland was one of three states, the others being Georgia and Connecticut, that passed gas tax holidays to lower prices.

Maryland's was the shortest suspension. Georgia's moratorium lasts from March 18 to May 31, and Connecticut's runs from April 1 to June 30.

I-495 Southside Express Lanes Study City of Alexandria, Fairfax County and Prince George's County, MD

Virtual Public Information Meeting
Wednesday, May 18, 2022, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. (presentation at 7 p.m.)
<https://www.virginiadot.org/495Southside>

In-person Public Information Meetings
All meeting times are 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.
Presentation starts at 7 p.m.

Thursday, May 19, 2022
Oxon Hill High School
6701 Leyte Drive, Oxon Hill, MD 20745

Monday, May 23, 2022
John R. Lewis High School
6540 Franconia Road, Springfield, VA 22150

Wednesday, May 25, 2022
Nannie J. Lee Memorial Recreation Center
1108 Jefferson Street, Alexandria, VA 22314

Learn about and provide input on the Virginia Department of Transportation's (VDOT) proposed 11-mile extension of the I-495 Express Lanes from the Springfield interchange (I-95/I-395/I-495) in Fairfax County, Virginia, across the Woodrow Wilson Bridge, to the MD 210 interchange in Prince George's County, Maryland. The goals and objectives of this I-495 Southside Express Lanes Study (495 Southside Study) are to evaluate transportation improvements that extend and provide continuity of the Express Lanes system on I-495 (Capital Beltway), provide additional travel choices, reduce congestion, improve travel reliability, improve safety, and provide consistency with local and regional plans.

VDOT will hold a virtual meeting option, as well as three in-person meeting options. All meetings will include the same information.

The virtual public meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 18, from 6:30-8:30 p.m., with a presentation at 7 p.m., followed by a question-and-answer session. Visit <https://www.virginiadot.org/495Southside> or call 703-259-3752 for information about how to access and participate in the virtual public information meeting.

The in-person public information meetings will be held on Thursday, May 19, at Oxon Hill High School. Monday, May 23 at John R. Lewis High School, and Wednesday, May 25, at Nannie J. Lee Memorial Recreation Center. Each in-person meeting will be held from 6:30-8:30 p.m., with a formal presentation beginning at 7 p.m., followed by a question-and-answer session. Meeting display boards will be available to review, and project staff will be present to answer questions. In-person meetings will follow current CDC-recommended health measures and guidelines.

VDOT, in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and other federal, state and local agencies in Virginia and Maryland, has initiated an Environmental Assessment in compliance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and 23 CFR Part 771.

Review study information on the project webpage (<https://www.virginiadot.org/495Southside>), during the virtual and in-person public information meetings, or during business hours at VDOT's Northern Virginia District Office, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030. Please call ahead at 703-259-3752 or TTY/TDD 711 to ensure appropriate personnel are available to answer your questions.

Provide your input by completing a public opinion survey at <https://www.virginiadot.org/495Southside>, and by providing your written comments at one of the meetings or submitting them by June 6, 2022 to Nick Nies, AICP, VDOT 495 Southside Express Lanes Study Project Manager, 9030 Stony Point Parkway, Suite 220, Richmond, VA 23235, or email 495southsideexpresslanes@vdot.virginia.gov.

VDOT ensures nondiscrimination and equal employment in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need more information or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, contact VDOT Civil Rights at 703-259-1775.

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communities. We have also implemented office-to-office support as well as brought recently retired employees back to assist the public. We thank the many interested stakeholders including the Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Community Living and national advocate organizations for your help.

Throughout the pandemic, millions of people have used our secure and convenient online services and received help by phone. People who have access to the internet should first try our online services before calling us or visiting an office.

As we transition to a new modern phone system, some people may experience a busy signal or be unintentionally disconnected from their call. We sincerely regret this disruption and recommend people call when our National 800 Number may be less busy, such as before 10 a.m. or after 4 p.m. local time or later in the week. Like our offices, our waits are generally shorter later in the month.

To learn more, please visit www.socialsecurity.gov/coronavirus/gethelp/ and www.socialsecurity.gov/onlineservices/.

Additional Information

Most Social Security services are available to the public online at www.socialsecurity.gov and with a my Social Security account, or by telephone. And most Social Security services do not require the public to take time to visit an office. People may create their my Social Security account, a personalized online service, at www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount.

People who set up their my Social Security account have access to additional personalized services. They can request a replacement Social Security card online if they meet certain requirements. If they already receive Social Security benefits, they can start or change direct deposit online, request a replacement SSA-1099, and if they need proof of their benefits, they can print or download a current Benefit Verification Letter from their account.

People not yet receiving benefits can use their online account to get a personalized Social Security Statement, which provides their earnings information as well as estimates of their future benefits. The portal also includes a retirement calculator and links to information about other online services, such as applications for retirement, disability, and Medicare benefits.

Many Social Security services are also conveniently available by dialing toll-free, 1 800 772 1213. People who are deaf or hard of hearing may call Social Security's TTY number, 1 800 325 0778.

To get more Social Security news, follow the Press Office on Twitter @SSAPress.

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