

**Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland, Inc.
Delegate Veronica Turner, Chair**



2010 Legislative Priorities

Legislative Review Committee
February 2010

For the 2010 legislative session, members of the Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland have put forth legislation that will attempt to alleviate the disproportionate disparities that continue to plague the African American community.

Although we have made some strides throughout the years, there is still a lot of work to be done. We have included several pieces of legislation that the Caucus will be strongly supporting this session. This list is not all-inclusive, as we will continue to examine other legislation that may either support or hinder our community.

We have identified four major target areas that are pertinent to the Caucus this year: the budget, economic development, education and health care.

Budget

We will continue to examine and watch the changes in disparities grants and school construction formulas; support general budget items for our HBCUs and other predominately-black institutions; and the idea of payments in lieu of taxes due to the increasing number of non-profit occupancy in our jurisdictions.

Economic Development

We look to diversify the State's Retirement and Pension Board of Trustees and create a reciprocal and electronic certification process. These items will improve efficiencies, help alleviate some of the issues within the certification process and ultimately improve opportunities for MBEs in state procurement.

Education

We are focusing on changing the compulsory attendance age from 16 to 18 over a two year period; waiving the maintenance of effort penalty for fiscal year 2010 and stop the attempts to duplicate higher education programs from HBCUs.

Health Care

Our issues under healthcare are mainly budgetary, yet they may lead to some policy implications. We want to ensure that adequate funding is given to effectively combat infant mortality –60% of the 617 infant deaths are African American; and funding to address the growing numbers of HIV/AIDS cases through prevention programs.

Economic Development

Credit Card Blacklisting Prevention Act

This bill will prohibit a person from including or enforcing a provision of a consumer credit contract that will trigger a default, an acceleration of payment, an increase of interest rate or reduce the credit rate, without written permission from the consumer.

General Obligation Bonds for Capital Projects-Required Reports (House Bill 209)

This bill will require any hospital or institution of higher education that receives at least \$500,000 to complete a capital project to submit a report to the Governor's Office of Minority Affairs regarding the extent to which any part of the funds will be used with a minority-owned business.

Procurement-Minority Business Enterprise-Reciprocal Certification (Senate Bill 130)

This bill requires the Board of Public Works to adopt regulations to recognize and accommodate minority business enterprises that receive certification from the U.S. Small Business Administration or a county government in the state of Maryland.

State Procurement-Minority Business Enterprise-Electronic Certification Process (Senate Bill 131)

This bill requires the Board of Public Works to adopt regulations to include provisions that will allow a business seeking certification as a minority business enterprise to complete the application through an electronic process.

State Retirement and Pension Boards of Trustees-Membership-Diversity

This bill states that the members of the Board of Trustees for the State Retirement and Pension System, Maryland Teachers and State Employees Supplemental Retirement Plans reflect the geographic, racial, ethnic, cultural and gender diversity of the state.

Procurement-Minority Business Enterprises-Waiver Requirements

This bill will prohibit any unit of government from waiving the contractor's obligations for minority business enterprise participation unless the contractor publicly published a solicitation and did not receive any response after at least thirty days.

Taskforce on Minority Business Enterprise Program and Equity Investment Capital

(Senate Bill 2/House Bill 222)

This bill establishes a Task Force on the Minority Business Enterprise Program and Equity Investment Capital to review the State's economic development strategies and the extent to which those strategies encourage investment in MBEs.

Education

Maintenance of Effort-Penalty

This legislation will waive the maintenance of effort penalty for fiscal year 2010.

Education-Age of Compulsory Attendance-Exemptions (Senate Bill 239)

This bill will alter the age from 16 to 18 for which children are required to attend public school regularly during the school year.

Elementary and Secondary Education-Health Curriculum-Diabetes Education

This bill will require each county board of education to include instruction in diabetes education in the health education curriculum.

Teachers and Other Personnel-Transfer-Notice

This legislation requires a county superintendent to provide written notice of a transfer to the respective individual at least ten days before the transfer.

***"Race to the Top" Grant**

This legislation is pending. The sponsor is waiting for more information on the mandates and how it would affect legislation.

Environmental Matters

Environment-Reducing Lead Risk in Housing-Lead Paint Dust Testing (Senate Bill 504)

This bill requires an owner of an affected property under the Reduction of Lead Risk in Housing Program to satisfy the risk reduction standard at each change of occupancy by passing the test for lead contaminated dust and performing the specified lead hazard reduction treatments.

Public Safety-Regulation of Demolition-Demolition Contractors

This bill requires a demolition contractor to obtain a permit from a local authority before beginning demolition in the State and establishes prerequisites for obtaining the permit. The bill establishes pre-demolition requirements, including an on-site consultation from the local authority and provision of notification to specified parties. The bill establishes requirements for the removal, recycling, selling, and distribution of removable architectural materials from a demolition site, including specified notice of potential exposure to lead-based paint. The bill also requires special permits activities and establishes other requirements for activities that must occur before, during, and after demolition activity.

Law and Justice

Criminal Law-Electronic Harassment of A Minor (Senate Bill 186)

This bill prohibits a person from sending electronic communication with the intent to threaten, harass, intimidate, or terrify a minor.

Employment Application Criminal History Checkbox

This bill removes the check box from state employment forms that asks applicants if they have ever been convicted of a crime other than a minor traffic violation.

No Representation Without Population Act (Senate Bill 400/House Bill 496)

This bill will require that incarcerated individuals should be counted at the last known residence before incarceration instead of the location of their incarceration for the decennial census.

Transportation

Transportation-Transit Vehicle Operators-Prohibition on Use of Wireless Communication Devices (House Bill 520)

This bill will prohibit a person from using a wireless communication device while operating a transit vehicle.

Budgetary Items

1. Examine/watch for changes in the disparities grants for Baltimore City and Prince George's County
2. Support general budget items for HBCUs and PBIs (Predominately-Black Institutions) such as Baltimore City Community College
3. Support capital budget item for University of Maryland Eastern Shore's engineering building.
4. Examine school construction formulas.
5. Infant mortality and HIV/AIDS funding

Legislative Review Committee

Senator Catherine Pugh –Chair, Legislative Review Committee

Delegate James Proctor, Jr. –Chair, Budget and Higher Education
Committees

Senator Ulysses Currie –Co-Chair, Budget Committee

Delegate Michael Vaughn –Chair, Economic Development Committee

Delegate Carolyn J.B. Howard –Chair, Education K-12 Committee

Delegate Jolene Ivey –Co-Chair, Education K-12 Committee

Senator David Harrington –Chair, Environmental Matters Committee

Delegate Nathaniel Oaks –Co-Chair, Environmental Matters Committee

Delegate Shirley Nathan-Pulliam –Chair, Health Care Committee

Delegate Joseline Peña-Melnyk –Chair, Law and Justice Committee

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