



BARRY GLASSMAN

HARFORD COUNTY EXECUTIVE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Harford's Glassman Proposes FY22 Budget: Fully Funds Education; Sets Funding Record for Public Safety; Cuts Property Tax Burden by Adopting Constant Yield

BEL AIR, Md., (April 12, 2021) - Harford County Executive Barry Glassman released today his recommended fiscal year 2022 budget, which fully funds the board of education's operating request for the second consecutive year. This historic budget also sets record funding levels for public safety and libraries while easing the property tax burden on homeowners and businesses by adopting the constant yield rate.

The constant yield rate will be lower than the current rate and is calculated to keep the county's property tax revenues flat despite increasing state assessments of property values.

"Throughout this year Harford County has been resilient despite the pandemic and the state government shutdown of part of our local economy," County Executive Glassman said in a video outlining his budget. "My conservative budgeting and investment in digital platforms have allowed us to weather this storm."

Capital project highlights include funding to begin the replacement of Homestead Wakefield Elementary School; modernization of Joppatowne High School, and special education facility improvements for Harford County Public Schools.

Public safety projects include funding to fully implement a body-worn camera program and overdue police car fleet replacement for the Harford County Sheriff's Office; full funding for volunteer fire companies' priority repairs and life safety equipment; upgrades to communications technology, and renovations for Susquehanna Hose Company House 1.

Other capital projects include broadband infrastructure to support high speed internet service; county road and bridge projects, and full funding for a new community center in Aberdeen.

County Executive Glassman’s budget video is posted on the county website, along with his full budget proposal at <https://www.harfordcountymd.gov/1531/Budget-Efficiency>.

Budget highlights appear below.

Total Budget All Funds: \$1,038,422,500

General Fund Operating Budget: \$658,625,000

Capital Budget: \$201,625,500

RESTORING BALANCE & EFFICIENCY

- Property tax rate lowered by adopting constant yield
- Conservative budgeting while keeping a resilient local economy safely open
- Fully funded HCPS operating budget request
- Record-level funding for public safety
- County government efficiencies continue to help fund other operations
- AAA bond rating brings lowest borrowing costs in county history; highest possible rating maintained due to strong management and realistic CIP

REINVESTING IN OUR WORKFORCE

- \$3,000 merit-based increase plus 3% COLA per qualifying county employee
 - Equivalent increases for State’s Attorney’s Office and Circuit Court employees
- Full funding for Sheriff’s requested wage enhancements for law, corrections and civilian personnel
- Pension enhancements for correctional officers
- \$1,000 COVID hazard bonus for all eligible employees

INVESTING IN EDUCATION – Record-level funding:

- **Full funding for Harford County Public Schools**
 - \$293,812,984 in FY22 operating funds for HCPS; total increase of \$16.9 million over FY21; exceeds the required Maintenance of Effort
- **3% increase for Harford Community College**
- **3% increase for Harford County Public Libraries**

COUNTY vs. STATE SCHOOL FUNDING INCREASES

FY16 – FY22 Operating Funds

- County Funds: \$70,205,682
- State Funds: \$29,208,174

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES

- **\$1 million for preventing and treating opioid addiction & behavioral health services**
 - County support for the 24-hour Harford Crisis Center for Mental Health & Addiction continues with \$250,000 contribution
- **Support for community organizations:**
 - Harford County Humane Society
 - Harford Center
 - The Arc Northern Chesapeake

SUPPORTING OUR FIRST RESPONDERS

- **Historic-level funding for our first responders:**
 - \$7,688,408 - Volunteer Fire Companies; representing a 3% increase over FY 2021 plus \$300,000 for NEXT GEN Responder student loan repayment program for volunteer recruitment and retention
 - \$5,497,069 - Harford County Volunteer Fire and EMS Foundation; represents a 3% increase

CAPITAL PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- **HCPS: 14 projects @ \$35.8 million**
 - Engineering and design for replacement of Homestead Wakefield Elementary School
 - Roof replacement for Center for Educational Opportunity
 - Modernization of Joppatowne High School
 - Abingdon Elementary School central plant replacement
 - Special education facility improvements
 - Replacement/upgrade to life safety emergency systems and communication equipment
 - Replacement of 10 special education buses as mandated by the State
- **Public safety: 9 projects @ \$18.1 million**
 - Fully implemented body-worn camera program
 - Fully funded volunteer fire company priority repairs and life safety equipment
 - Computer equipment for the Sheriff's Office
 - Construction of North Harford county EMS station
 - Funds to support Next-Gen 911 technology and upgrade the mobile/portable radio system
 - Susquehanna Hose Company House 1 renovations
- **Additional capital projects**
 - \$20 million - Broadband infrastructure
 - \$34.9 million - County road and bridge projects
 - \$12.4 million - Watershed management projects
 - \$18.4 million - Water & sewer infrastructure reinvestments
 - \$9 million - to fully fund new Aberdeen community center
 - \$6.5 million - for comprehensive upgrades to Harford Community College's Chesapeake Welcome Center

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