



County Executive Bob Cassilly eNewsletter

February 2025

As my budget team and I continue developing the county's budget for next year, remember our [**budget town hall event will be held this Thursday, Feb. 6**](#), to hear your priorities. If you can't attend in person, you can email us at [**iGovHarford@harfordcountymd.gov**](mailto:iGovHarford@harfordcountymd.gov).

We want to hear from you!

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Harford County Executive

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COUNTY COUNCIL
OF
HARFORD COUNTY, MARYLAND

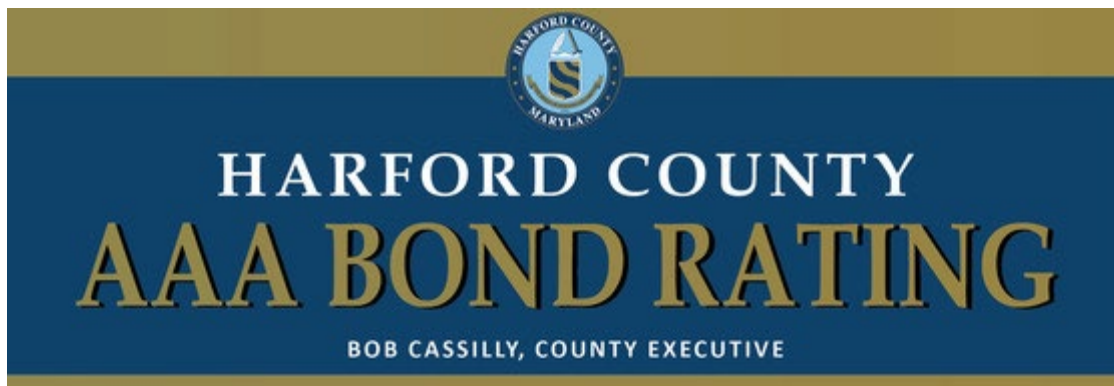
BILL NO. 24-037

Legislative Day No. 24-029

Date November 12, 2024

Defeat of bill allowing liquor stores, cannabis dispensaries near residential neighborhoods

Thank you to the many citizens and the majority of council members who joined me in opposing County Council Bill 24-037. This ill-advised legislation would have allowed liquor stores, and therefore, recreational cannabis dispensaries, in any of the 232 parcels countywide that are zoned B-1, a zoning appropriate for daycare centers, churches and other neighborhood-friendly uses. Harford County is pro-business, but we are also pro-family and that is why our zoning code directs certain businesses away from areas that are intended to support residential neighborhoods.



AAA bond rating saves taxpayer money

Harford County retained our AAA bond rating this year, placing us among the top 2% of counties nationwide for responsible fiscal management. The rating agencies were favorably impressed with our efforts to manage county expenses and control debt. This highest possible rating allowed us to sell \$60 million of new bonds yesterday at a 3.49% interest rate. Proceeds will help finance the following projects: the new combination elementary school/ Harford Academy for students with special needs; the Harford Technical High School renovation, the new Homestead Wakefield Elementary School; Harford Community College's Chesapeake Welcome Center; roads; bridges, and stormwater and wastewater projects.



Statement on the school superintendent's recommended budget

I want to express my appreciation for Superintendent Bulson's budget development process, which recognizes that increases in school funding cannot significantly outpace the growth in county revenue coming from taxpayers.

The superintendent is requesting an 8% increase from the county, or \$26M more, which is still higher than our anticipated rate of revenue growth, but much more reasonable than the earlier estimated increase of 18% and a strong step in the right direction.

My budget team and I are working to reduce the county's structural deficit and create a balanced budget that does not raise taxes. We are also closely monitoring efforts by the state to balance its budget by shifting costs on to the counties. Early indications are that Harford could face an additional \$6M in new funding mandates from the state, about half of which are increased contributions for teacher pensions.

Considering these challenges, I encourage the school board to carefully review the superintendent's requested budget, as we all continue working together on behalf of the citizens we serve.



Minority & Small Business Resource Fair Feb. 26

Minority and small business owners can learn about state and county resources to help start, manage and grow a business at the Minority & Small Business Resource Fair. Held annually during Black History Month, this year's fair will be open from 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. on Wednesday, February 26 at the CONVERGE Center, 1201 Technology Drive, Aberdeen. [Register online](#) or on site for this free event to help business owners connect with resources. The fair is brought to you by the Harford Chamber of Commerce in partnership with our Department of Economic Development and the Harford County Caucus of African American Leaders and is sponsored by APGFCU.



"Inside Harford County" - Celebrate Bush 250

This month on "Inside Harford County," we'll highlight the 250th anniversary of the Bush Declaration, the nation's first declaration of independence by elected officials, which was signed in Harford County by brave souls who risked their lives for liberty. Join me and Sandra Wallis, chair of the Bush Declaration Anniversary Committee, as we talk with our host, Mark Vernarelli, about upcoming Bush 250 events for all ages. "Inside Harford County" is [HarfordTV's](#) half-hour community affairs program airing at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesdays on Armstrong channel 7 & HD 101, Comcast channel 31 & HD 1084, and Verizon channel 31.



State of Harford County Address

In case you missed it, please click above for a brief video highlighting my administration's first year in office and the text and video of my State of the County Address delivered to the County Council and the public on January 14.



Fun things to do in Harford County

[Visit our website and calendar of events](#) for details.

Want more?

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Got Feedback?

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