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General Assembly Passes Bill to Permanently Preserve 22,000 Acres of Maryland Wild Areas

April 1st, 2014

ANNAPOLIS, MD – The Maryland General Assembly today passed legislation (SB 336/HB 296) to expand Maryland's Wildlands system by 50 percent, permanently protecting the wilderness character of 22,000 acres of sensitive State-owned lands. Governor Martin O'Malley formally proposed the legislation at the beginning of the General Assembly session in January.



"Maryland's Wildlands are the last remaining untouched landscapes and waterways of their kind, supporting sensitive ecosystems and many rare and vanishing plants and animals," said **Governor O'Malley**, who will sign the legislation into law. "It is our responsibility to preserve these areas today, so there can be no question about how they will be used or developed in the future. The passing of this bill is another significant step forward in securing the health and prosperity of our natural world."

The last new Wildlands designations — made 12 years ago — expanded the system to 29 areas in 15 counties, covering 43,779 acres, [listed here](#). Since then, DNR has acquired new properties that meet [Wildlands](#) criteria, with additional areas identified

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upon completion of an Old Growth Forests inventory and mapping of high conservation forests and environmentally sensitive areas on DNR-managed lands.

During 2013, the Department of Natural Resources conducted an extensive public review of an initial proposal, which resulted in some modifications to better accommodate the needs and desires of citizens and stakeholders. The final version of the bill designates new or expanded Wildlands in Allegany, Baltimore, Calvert, Charles, Frederick, Garrett, Montgomery, Somerset and Worcester counties.

“Under this designation, these primitive areas will be forever protected, remaining changeless under the watch of future land managers after our time here has long passed away,” said **DNR Secretary Joseph P. Gill**.

Wildlands benefit the economy of local communities by attracting birdwatchers, photographers, backpackers and others who enjoy nature. Many Wildlands serve as home to rare and vanishing species such as hellbenders and purple-fringed orchids. Other recreational pursuits like hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking and horseback riding, as well as research, are all permitted within the system.

More than 90 percent of citizens surveyed by the Maryland Greenways Commission said that some parts of Maryland should be left in their natural state forever.

“Ecologists, biologists and geologists say that conservation is needed on a landscape scale to maintain clean water, healthy air and diverse wildlife populations, and build ecosystem resilience to a rapidly changing climate,” said **Joel Dunn, Executive Director of the Chesapeake Conservancy**. “Efforts like the expansion of the Maryland Wildlands Preservation System and conservation programs such as Program Open Space help make these goals possible, and we commend the Governor and the legislature for their support of this important expansion.”



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Governor O'Malley, Lt. Governor Brown Issue Joint Statement on Maryland Health Benefit Exchange Board Vote

April 1st, 2014

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor O'Malley and Lt. Governor Brown issued the following joint statement on the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange Board's recommendation to upgrade the exchange's IT system:

"Thanks to the incredible hard work and commitment of hundreds of consumer assistance workers, brokers, carriers, Exchange staff, and many other stakeholders — Maryland exceeded our goal and has so far enrolled more than 295,000 people during this first open enrollment period. That means a lot to these families who have the security and peace-of-mind that comes with having quality, affordable health care. And it means a lot for the long-term affordability of our healthcare system.

The hard work of getting so many Marylanders enrolled was made even tougher because Maryland's health exchange website did not meet expectations — a source of great frustration, especially for those who were trying to obtain healthcare for the very first time.

Our Administration has not succeeded at every first try, but we have never given up. We learn from both success and failure. The vendors we hired failed to build us the platform they promised. So now that the first open enrollment period has ended, we've decided to upgrade our website.

The Health Exchange Board selected a partner with a proven track record to upgrade our website using a platform that has an established record of success. We're confident that this partner will have the website upgraded by the time the next open enrollment period begins in November.

The Maryland Health Exchange is much more than a website. It's the board, policies, connector entities, call center, other consumer assistance networks, staff, and many other aspects that have allowed the state to exceed its enrollment goal despite the IT challenges. All of this will all remain in place. The website is one piece of the Exchange, and that piece is being upgraded."

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Click here to see the memo to the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange Board of Directors: <http://governor.maryland.gov/documents/033114healthitmemo.pdf>.



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Governor O'Malley Issues Statement on the Maryland Senate Finance Committee's Favorable Vote to Raise the Minimum Wage

April 2nd, 2014

ANNAPOLIS, MD — Governor O'Malley issued the following statement in connection with the Senate Finance Committee's favorable vote to raise the minimum wage:

"We've worked hard to forge consensus and bring people together in order to achieve progress for middle class families by giving Maryland a raise."



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Governor O'Malley Highlights Progress towards Achieving Goal of Boosting STEM Graduates in Maryland

April 3rd, 2014

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor Martin O'Malley announced today that Maryland college students are graduating from Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) degree programs at record rates. From 2006 to 2013, the number of STEM graduates from Maryland colleges and universities increased by 37.1% from 9,544 in 2006 to 13,082 in 2013.

In September 2008, Governor O'Malley created the [Governor's STEM Task Force](#) to make recommendations aimed at establishing Maryland as a global leader in the development of its future workforce and its STEM-based research and economic development infrastructure. One of the recommendations of the Task Force was to increase the number of STEM college graduates in Maryland by 40 percent by the year 2015. Governor O'Malley accepted these recommendations and included them in his [sixteen strategic policy goals](#). Especially in light of today's announcement, Maryland is on track to meet that goal.

Maryland continues to be a leader in STEM education, having been the first state in the nation to set specific STEM education standards that tell teachers not just what STEM is, but how to teach the subjects. A STEM education is critical to ensuring that students can compete for and obtain jobs in Maryland where there is a growing demand for skilled workers to fill federal research laboratories and cybersecurity jobs.

"Ensuring that our students are prepared to compete in the economy of tomorrow is an important part of strengthening STEM education in Maryland," said **Governor O'Malley**. "STEM programs offer our students the opportunity to broaden their skills, learn about new, cutting edge technology, and compete for jobs in fields such as technology, cybersecurity, and advanced manufacturing. Together, we will continue to provide our students with access to a high-quality education to ensure economic opportunity and strengthen and grow our middle class."

Governor O'Malley was joined at today's event by Jennifer Frank, the Assistant Secretary of the Maryland Higher Education Commission. Frank discussed the importance of a STEM education in building a 21st century economy.

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"Continuing to increase the number of STEM degrees awarded to students is a key goal for Maryland postsecondary education," said **Frank**. "Our colleges and universities are committed to attracting, retaining, and graduating students in these critical disciplines, as well as preparing high-quality teachers who will educate the STEM collegians of the future. We appreciate and commend the efforts of our two-year and four-year institutions throughout the state."

President Freeman Hrabowski of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County stated that we need to broaden the appeal of STEM to individuals with diverse backgrounds.

"We need to be doing more to change perceptions about who belongs in STEM fields," **Hrabowski** said. "At UMBC, for instance, our Center for Women in Information Technology (CWIT) is playing an important role helping women recognize their potential to become technology professionals and entrepreneurs. Preparing students from all backgrounds for technology-related careers — including many careers in which the arts, humanities, and social sciences play a vital role — will help our state and the nation remain competitive."

University of Maryland University College's President, **Javier Miyares**, added, "Maryland is the epicenter of the STEM-related cybersecurity industry and UMUC is now producing thousands of graduates who are filling key roles in this field that is vital to our economy and national security," stated Miyares. "In fact, we are building a spirit of community around STEM-success through our championship cyber security competition teams. We cheer for our UMUC Cyber Padawans the way students at other universities cheer for their basketball teams."

Increasing the number of STEM graduates is a key piece of the O'Malley-Brown Administration's [education agenda](#), which includes holding tuition at Maryland's four-year institutions to a 3.3% increase (the lowest in the nation) and having the number one public schools for a record five years in a row.

Note: You can view the event on the Governor's YouTube channel [here](#).



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Governor O'Malley Issues Statement on House Passage of Domestic Violence Bill

April 3rd, 2014

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor O'Malley today issued the following statement after the Maryland House of Delegates unanimously voted in favor of SB 337, part of the O'Malley-Brown Administration's bill legislative package. The bill enhances the penalty for committing a crime of violence in the presence of a minor at least two years of age (note: the General Assembly previously passed HB 307 and HB 309, the other components of the O'Malley-Brown Administration's comprehensive package combat domestic violence):

"I'd like to thank the General Assembly for voting in favor of SB 337. Every child deserves to grow up in a safe, stable home — because of this bill, we'll hold more abusers accountable while ensuring stable healthy homes for Maryland children."

Editor's Note: When the O'Malley-Brown Administration took office in 2007, they set a goal to drive down violent crime against women and children 25 percent by 2012, compared to 2006 levels. Together with the hardworking men and women of Maryland law enforcement, we have driven down juvenile homicides 44 percent since 2006 and female homicides 9 percent. In total, we've driven down the key metric for this goal, the sum of juvenile and female homicides, 23 percent since 2006. In 2013 Gov. O'Malley renewed our [commitment to protecting women and children](#) by setting a new goal to drive down violent crimes committed against women and children by 25% by the end of 2018, compared to 2012 levels. You can track progress on that goal here: <https://data.maryland.gov/goals/violence>







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Governor O'Malley Issues Statement on Final Passage of Pre-Kindergarten Bill

April 4th, 2014

ANNAPOLIS, MD – One of the O'Malley-Brown Administration's key strategic [goals](#) is driving up [the number of children entering kindergarten fully ready to learn](#). Governor O'Malley today issued the following statement after the Maryland House of Delegates voted in favor of the O'Malley-Brown Administration's pre-kindergarten expansion bill, which would establish a competitive Pre-Kindergarten Expansion Grant Program and Fund, through which schools systems and community-based providers can apply to expand and enhance existing pre-kindergarten programs:

"Over the last seven years, we've made the better choice to to strengthen and grow our middle class by expanding access to high-quality education for Maryland families — and we've seen better results: today we have made the greatest gains in low income student achievement nationwide. With the passage of this bill by the General Assembly, we'll ensure that every child in our State has the resources they need to compete not just nationally, but globally as well."

Editor's Note: The Administration's FY15 budget invests \$4.3 million to fund the program, which is expected to support half-day or full-day pre-kindergarten programs for approximately 1,600 additional children across the State. The O'Malley-Brown Administration set a [goal](#) to improve student achievement and school, college, and career readiness in Maryland by 25% by the end of 2015. The Administration announced recently that in 2013-14, 83% of Maryland children entered Kindergarten fully ready for school, a more than 38% increase (up from 60 percent) of 2005-06.



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Governor O'Malley Appoints Linda Chinnia to the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners

April 4th, 2014

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor Martin O'Malley, in conjunction with Baltimore City Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, announced the appointment of Linda M. Chinnia to the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners, effective immediately.

"I am proud to join Mayor Rawlings-Blake in announcing the appointment of Ms. Linda M. Chinnia to the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners," said **Governor Martin O'Malley**. "I am confident that she possesses the skill and leadership necessary to ensure that every child in Baltimore City receives the high-quality public education they deserve."

Baltimore City Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake commented, "Ms. Linda M. Chinnia is an outstanding appointment to the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners. She brings decades of experience as a Baltimore City educator to the board of commissioners and a proven track record of results and dedication to our students. Her leadership and passion will be a tremendous asset to Baltimore City."

Linda M. Chinnia received a bachelor's and master's degree in education from Towson State University with a concentration in early childhood education. She is currently the Assistant to the Bishop with the Delaware-Maryland Synod-Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. After a thirty-eight year career as a Baltimore City educator, she retired in 2007.

Ms. Chinnia brings a wealth of expertise and insight having begun her career as a classroom teacher and ending it as the Chief Academic Officer for the Baltimore City. She's worked as a Title I Senior Teacher, an Educational Specialist and an administrator in such positions as assistant principal, principal, and the Director of Elementary School Improvement. She is certified as a Principal Supervisor and in Early Childhood Education, Reading and Special Education. Additionally, Ms. Chinnia brings a wealth of expertise in business administration management, education and education of children with disabilities to the Board.

Chinnia also taught part time as an instructor at the Community College of Baltimore, Coppin State College and at Johns Hopkins University. In 2005, she was honored

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with the Distinguished Alumni Award from the College of Education, Towson University. She and her family are life-long residents of Baltimore.



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Governor O'Malley Praises Final Passage of Minimum Wage Increase

April 7th, 2014

ANNAPOLIS, MD — Governor O'Malley today released the following statement lauding the final passage of SB 331, legislation that increases the Maryland's minimum wage to \$10.10 and gives hundred of thousands of Marylanders a raise:

"My central focus as Governor of Maryland has been to to strengthen and grow the ranks of our ever more diverse and upwardly mobile middle class. That's why we invested record amounts in our #1-ranked public schools, why we did more than any other state in the nation to hold down the cost of college, why we expanded the Earned Income Tax Credit, why we chose to invest more in putting people to work rebuilding our transportation infrastructure, and why we are the only state in the nation that's passed a living wage law.

"This year, we are building on this record of strengthening the middle class by raising Maryland's minimum wage to \$10.10. We worked hard to bring people together and forge the consensus necessary to make this important progress possible. I commend the General Assembly for giving so many Maryland families the raise they deserve."



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Governor O'Malley Issues Statement on Passage of Marijuana Decriminalization Legislation

April 7th, 2014

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor O'Malley today released the following statement in response to the final passage of *Possession of Marijuana – Civil Offense (SB 364)*, which will decriminalize the possession of small amounts of marijuana:

"With more effective policing and more widely available drug treatment, together in Maryland, we have driven violent crime down to its lowest levels in 30 years. This progress has been hard-won and much remains to be done. Recent spikes in homicides and heroin overdose deaths underscore the life-saving urgency of the work before us."

"The General Assembly has decided after much consideration — and with clear majorities in both Chambers — to send to my desk a bill that would decriminalize the possession of small amounts of marijuana, and I plan to sign it."

"As a matter of judicial economy and prosecutorial discretion, few if any defendants go to prison for a first or even a second offense of marijuana possession in Maryland. Desuetude is often a precursor of reform."

"As a young prosecutor, I once thought that decriminalizing the possession of marijuana might undermine the Public Will necessary to combat drug violence and improve public safety. I now think that decriminalizing possession of marijuana is an acknowledgement of the low priority that our courts, our prosecutors, our police, and the vast majority of citizens already attach to this transgression of public order and public health. Such an acknowledgment in law might even lead to a greater focus on far more serious threats to public safety and the lives of our citizens."



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Governor O'Malley Signs Legislation to Expand High-Quality Pre-K in Maryland

April 8th, 2014

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor Martin O'Malley today joined fellow presiding officers, Speaker Michael Busch and Senate President Mike Miller, to sign the first of the [Administration's 2014 legislative priorities](#), the Pre-Kindergarten Expansion Act of 2014. The governor also signed several departmental bills passed by the General Assembly this year.

"Education is a ladder to middle class success. Over the course of the O'Malley-Brown Administration, we've focused on creating opportunity by making [record investments in Maryland's top ranked public schools](#), and since 2007-08, we've [done more than any other state in the nation to hold down the cost of college](#)," said **Governor Martin O'Malley**. "Thanks to the dynamic leadership of Lt. Governor Anthony Brown, along with overwhelming support from the General Assembly, our children will continue to lead the nation in achievement and eventually, the world."

In brief opening remarks, **Lt. Governor Anthony Brown** added, "Today, we have taken an important step toward providing universal, voluntary pre-k for all Maryland children. By enrolling an additional 1,600 kids in high quality pre-K, we're helping more of our students climb the ladder of opportunity toward success and continuing to close our state's achievement gap."

The Pre-Kindergarten Expansion Act of 2014 expands high-quality pre-kindergarten to more families across our State through a competitive grant program called the Pre-kindergarten Expansion Grant Program and Fund. With \$4.3 million included in the FY15 budget to help expand and start programs across the State, the legislation is expected to support half-day or full-day kindergarten for approximately 1,600 children statewide.

"Expanding high quality pre-k is a proven way to prepare every child in Maryland for success," said **Margaret Williams, Executive Director of the Maryland Family Network**. "We want to thank Lt. Governor Brown and the Administration for leading this year's legislation to expand access to more Maryland children and their families."

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The legislation also builds on the State's current Pre-K program by expanding the number of Pre-K slots available to include Maryland children whose families make between 185 percent and 300 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, which was \$70,650 for a family of four in 2013. Additionally, the bill paves the way for expanding access by ensuring that the State's long-term plan for education funding takes into account providing access to pre-kindergarten for all Maryland children.

As part of our [16 strategic goals](#), the O'Malley-Brown Administration has set benchmarks designed to [boost the number of children in Maryland who enter kindergarten fully ready to learn](#). Today, eighty-three percent of Maryland's kindergarteners entered school fully ready last year — that is up 38 percent (from sixty percent) since 2005.

For links to the bills signed today, click here: <http://www.governor.maryland.gov/documents/BillsSigned140408.pdf>.



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Governor Announces Retirement of Disabilities Secretary

April 9th, 2014

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor Martin O'Malley today announced that Catherine A. Raggio, Secretary of the Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD) will retire at the end of this month. Appointed by Governor O'Malley in February 2007, Raggio came to the State of Maryland with more than 30 years of experience in the disability community. Prior to her appointment, Raggio was the founder of Independence Now, a center for independent living (CIL) serving Montgomery and Prince George's counties, and served as its executive director for 12 years. From 1980-1989, she led the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council.

"Over the past seven years, Cathy has worked as an outstanding advocate for people with disabilities, addressing a number of critical issues for the disability community including employment and educational opportunities, housing, accessibility and inclusion," said **Governor O'Malley**. "Her leadership and vision for a Maryland where every individual has the chance to lead a productive, meaningful and independent life, has united the disability community. We are tremendously grateful for all her efforts to promote the many accomplishments of individuals with disabilities and underscore the importance of full citizenship and inclusion for all of our citizens."

As Secretary of MDOD, Raggio led an initiative to provide more affordable housing for people with disabilities. Under her leadership, the Maryland Affordable Rental Housing Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities "Weinberg Apartment" initiative was established with a \$2 million award from the Harry and Jeannette Weinberg Foundation. A successful partnership of state agencies, advocacy organizations and public housing authorities resulted in an \$11 million award from the U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to implement the Section 811 Project Rental Assistance Demonstration. The HUD Award will create 150 long-term affordable rental units for individuals with disabilities.

Believing that education and employment were critical to independence, Raggio created the Students United for Campus-Community Engagement for Post Secondary Success (SUCCESS) program at University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC), Maryland's first four year post-secondary education program for students with intellectual disabilities. A partnership between MDOD and UMBC, the SUCCESS program is in its second year with 13 students attending classes at

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UMBC.

“Working with Governor O’Malley to expand opportunities for Marylanders with disabilities and their families has been a tremendous honor and privilege,” said **Raggio**. “During my tenure at MDOD we have been fortunate to see many changes and accomplishments. Rosewood, Maryland’s oldest and largest state operated institution was closed; nearly 2,000 people moved from nursing facilities to homes of their own or other community based settings; and over 700 people entered or reentered the workforce by enrolling in the State’s Medicaid Buy-In, thus obtaining essential health insurance coverage.” Raggio’s future plans include traveling, volunteering and some consulting as she embarks on this new chapter in her life.

Governor O’Malley also announced that MDOD Deputy Secretary George P. Failla, Jr., with 19 years experience in State government, would assume the post as Acting Secretary. Failla joined MDOD in 2008. As Deputy Secretary, he directed the development, implementation and communication of MDOD’s policy initiatives across state government through the State Disabilities Plan; supervised the Maryland Technology Assistance Program (MD TAP) and the Access Maryland Capital Program; and coordinated the Department’s legislative agenda before the Maryland General Assembly.

Prior to his appointment at MDOD, Failla served 13 years with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) Division of Special Education/ Early Intervention Services in various capacities. A graduate of the University of Maryland School of Law, Failla provided legal assistance to the Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services and acted as a liaison between parents and advocates for students with disabilities, local school systems and state agencies regarding the delivery of special education services and school based related services through Medicaid. In 1987, Failla was selected Outstanding Youth with a Disability by the Governor’s Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. Failla lives in Carroll County with his wife and young son.



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[Governor O’Malley Signs Domestic Violence and Public Safety Bills to Protect Families and Preserve Strong Communities in Maryland »](#)

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Governor O'Malley Signs Domestic Violence and Public Safety Bills to Protect Families and Preserve Strong Communities in Maryland

April 14th, 2014

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Building on tremendous progress driving down violent crime to 30-year lows, Governor O'Malley today signed legislation to strengthen and improve public safety in Maryland. Three of Governor O'Malley's [16 strategic goals](#) involve enhancing the security of Maryland's people.

Among the bills Governor O'Malley signed today were three measures to combat domestic violence. These efforts are part of the Administration's [goal to protect women, children and families](#) by reducing violent crimes committed against women and children by 25 percent by the end of 2018. One of the measures lowers the burden of proof for final peace and protection orders from "clear and convincing evidence" to a "preponderance of evidence." Another bill gives judges the ability to administer stricter penalties for committing acts of violence in front of a child. The third bill will add 2nd degree assault to the list of crimes for which domestic violence victims can obtain a final permanent protective order.

"The most sacred responsibility for any government is to protect the safety of its people. Working together with communities and law enforcement, we've driven violent crime down to its lowest level in 30 years," said **Governor O'Malley**. "The bills we're signing into law today will help us build on this important progress and help keep more Maryland families and communities safe."

"Domestic Violence impacts all of our communities, without discrimination based on color or religion; socioeconomic status or location." said **Lt. Governor Brown**, who spearheaded efforts this session to pass the Administration's domestic violence legislative package. "Building strong communities starts with keeping people safe in their homes, and while the bills we're signing today are the next step in that effort, we will not rest until every Marylander is free from the fear of this senseless crime."

The governor also signed bills codifying parts of a 2008 executive order creating the Maryland Statewide Interoperable Communications program. The legislation established a board to oversee the final development, operations and day-to-day management of the program to advance the State's efforts to unify public safety communications for first responders in the event of an emergency or during extreme

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weather events.

To ensure [security and integrity](#) in Maryland's correctional facilities, the Governor also signed bills to (1) enhance the State's efforts to combat contraband in correctional facilities; (2) to unify intelligence gathering and internal investigations into one unit, creating a newly named Intelligence and Investigative Unit (IIU); and (3) to ensure the integrity of corrections officers by improving the Correctional Officers Bill of Rights.

Some of the other notable bills signed include Jake's law, a bill that elevates the penalty for texting while driving to a criminal offense, and requires drivers involved in serious accidents to give law enforcement basic phone information so they can more quickly investigate activities leading to the crash. The Governor also signed legislation expanding Maryland's medical marijuana program. And to better align our public safety efforts with judicial practice, the governor signed legislation decriminalizing possession of less than 10 grams of marijuana in Maryland.

In 2007, the O'Malley-Brown administration set a goal to drive down violent crime by 20 percent by 2012. Since that time, working with the brave men and women of law enforcement and a broad coalition of community partners, the administration met that goal in 2001, set a new goal and surpassed it yet again in 2012. The bills Governor O'Malley signed today also advance three of the Administration's [16 strategic goals](#) to [reduce violent crime by 20% by the end of 2018](#); [reduce violent crimes against women and children by 25% by the end of 2018](#); and [deliver and maintain Maryland's twelve core goals for homeland security preparedness by 2016](#).

To learn more about the O'Malley-Brown Administration's 2014 legislative accomplishments, click here: <http://governor.maryland.gov/documents/2014LegSessionPublicSafety.pdf>.

The full list of bills signed today can be found here: <http://www.governor.maryland.gov/documents/BillsSigned140414.pdf>.



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MARC Weekend Ridership Blossoms

April 15th, 2014

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor Martin O'Malley and Lt. Governor Anthony Brown today announced that it was another record-breaking weekend for the Maryland Department of Transportation's Maryland Transit Administration's (MTA) popular MARC Penn Line service as thousands of tourists took to the rails to enjoy several Washington, D.C. attractions, including the final weekend of the National Cherry Blossom Festival. Preliminary ridership figures indicate that approximately 13,338 passengers rode MARC Penn Line trains on Saturday, April 12, and Sunday, April 13 – tripling the ridership figure of 4,085 during the launch of the weekend service on December 7 and December 8.

"Our investments in expanding MARC service have allowed more Marylanders to enjoy the weekend sights and sounds of Baltimore and Washington, D.C. without having to get behind the wheel of their cars," said **Governor O'Malley**. "Expanding MARC service will help us meet our goals of doubling transit ridership by 2020 and reducing Maryland's greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent by 2020."

MARC weekend service was made possible thanks to \$46 million added by Governor O'Malley and Lt. Governor Brown to the Maryland Department of Transportation's six-year budget with funds from the Transportation Infrastructure Investment Act of 2013 (Transportation Act).

"Adding weekend service on the MARC Penn Line translates into expanding opportunities for more Marylanders," said **Lt. Governor Brown**. "From expanding existing transit service to moving forward with the next generation of transit in the Red and Purple Lines, this Administration has made transportation investments a priority to help move our economy forward and create jobs for Maryland families."

MARC weekend service offers nine round trips between Penn Station and Union Station on Saturdays and six round trips on Sundays for the same \$7.00 one-way fare offered on weekdays with monthly and weekly passes honored. Serving Martin State Airport, Baltimore's Penn Station, West Baltimore, Halethorpe, BWI, Odenton, Bowie, New Carrollton and Washington, D.C.'s Union Station, the complete schedule is available online at www.mta.maryland.gov.

"From the Cherry Blossom Festival to the Washington Wizards and Capitals games, we appreciate the patience of our customers in dealing with the high volume of riders utilizing MARC weekend service between Baltimore and Washington D.C.,"

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said **MTA Administrator Robert Smith**. “We continue to encourage MARC weekend customers to arrive at their stations early and purchase tickets in advance to avoid long lines and the extra on-board \$3.00 surcharge at stations that have ticket kiosks.”

For the latest information on MTA service, passengers are urged to check the MTA website at www.mta.maryland.gov. Customers can also call the MTA Transit Information Contact Center Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. at [410-359-5000](tel:410-359-5000) or TTY [410-539-3497](tel:410-539-3497). To sign up for email about service modifications and delays, go to www.mta.maryland.gov/enotifications. Visit MTA's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/mtamaryland> or Twitter feed at <http://twitter.com/mtamaryland>.



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Governor O'Malley Announces Maryland's March Jobs Numbers

April 18th, 2014

Annapolis, Md. (April 18, 2014) – Governor O'Malley today announced that Maryland saw an increase in jobs numbers in March. According to the federal Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), Maryland added 2,300 total jobs last month and Maryland's private sector gained 1,800 jobs. When compared to last March, Maryland added 14,000 jobs and gained jobs in nine of the last 12 months.

According to the preliminary survey data, Maryland's March 2014 unemployment rate dropped to 5.6 percent—the lowest level since November 2008.

Maryland's unemployment rate for February was revised downward to 5.6 percent, from the initial estimate of 5.7 percent. Maryland's preliminary February jobs estimate was revised upward by BLS, with the originally reported loss of 600 jobs revised to a gain of 1,000 jobs.

"With better choices, come better results. Maryland continues to show strong growth and resilience, with our private sector leading the way by creating 10,900 jobs over the past 12 months, or nearly eight out of ten new jobs. March marks yet another month of solid gains for our economy," said **Governor O'Malley**. "Every choice we make is about creating jobs, expanding opportunity and strengthening Maryland's middle class. The most important job we create is the next one."

"Since the beginning of the year, the number of unemployed Marylanders has fallen by more than 13,300 and has declined for the past nine consecutive months. We're on the right track and continuing to cultivate our best-in-the-nation workforce through innovative, industry-based employment initiatives such as EARN," said Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR) **Secretary Leonard Howie**.

"The most important investment the State can make is in our most precious resource — our people — this is the second year in a row the EARN Program has received funding from the Governor's budget. Working together, we're ensuring that our companies and workforce have what they need to compete and win in the New Economy."

Over-the-month, the Trade, Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities sector led private sector growth by adding 2,200 jobs, with 2,200 jobs coming from the Retail Trade subsector.

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The Professional and Business Services sector posted the second highest jobs gain in March, adding 1,200 jobs with the Administrative and Support Services subsector adding 900 jobs and the Professional, Scientific and Technical Services subsector adding 100 jobs.

Several factors indicate that Maryland's economic strength is growing. Maryland is one of the Top Three states in the nation for economic mobility according to the Pew Center on the States. For the second year in a row, Maryland is #1 in the nation for Entrepreneurship and Innovation according to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. In 2013, Maryland ranked 4th in the nation, and #1 in the region, for total green jobs, according to Environmental Entrepreneurs.



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Governor O'Malley Announces Luminal Moves to Maryland, Receives \$600,000 from InvestMaryland

April 21st, 2014

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor Martin O'Malley announced today that Luminal, a cybersecurity startup that simplifies and secures cloud computing systems, has moved to Frederick from West Virginia and has been awarded a \$600,000 investment from the State's *InvestMaryland* program. Administered by the State's Maryland Venture Fund (MVF), *InvestMaryland* is a public-private partnership of the State and venture capital firms and one of Governor O'Malley's key economic development initiatives. *InvestMaryland* raised \$84 million to reinvigorate the State-run MVF and support the growth of young Maryland companies in biotechnology, cybersecurity, e-commerce and other high-growth industries.

"Investing in young, high-tech companies is a critical piece of Maryland's strategy to strengthen and expand our Innovation Economy, grow family-sustaining jobs, and support the development of technologies that keep us safer, healthier and better connected than ever before," said **Governor O'Malley**. "We are proud to make this investment in Luminal and to have them in our state. Maryland is the epicenter of cybersecurity and we look forward to Luminal playing a significant and growing role in that community."

"The current model for computing is broken, and bad actors are racing far ahead of available defenses," said Josh Stella, CEO of Luminal and previously a principal solutions architect at Amazon Web Services. "We're taking advantage of the nature of cloud computing to deliver native security, declarative control, and operational simplicity previously unattainable."

Luminal is addressing deficiencies in traditional computing architectures that lead to security vulnerabilities and operational complexity. The company is working with early customers to further develop its solution, called "Fugue," for general availability, initially on Amazon Web Services. Luminal will use the MVF investment, part of a \$3.8 million fundraising round in which Core Capital Partners and New Enterprise Associates also participated, to grow its engineering staff to continue product development and expand its customer base.

Luminal's move to Maryland has allowed the company to take advantage of other Maryland programs supporting cybersecurity companies. The company is one of the

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first in the State to apply for the Cybersecurity Investment Incentive Tax Credit, which kicked off earlier this year. Luminal was also recently named one of three cybersecurity finalists in the *InvestMaryland* Challenge, the State's national business competition. The winners of more than \$700,000 in prizes available through the Challenge will be announced in May.

Created by Governor O'Malley and passed by the General Assembly in 2011, *InvestMaryland* is the largest venture capital investment initiative in Maryland's history. In March 2012, the State raised \$84 million for the program through an online auction of tax credits to Maryland insurance companies. Two-thirds of the funding – \$56 million – is being managed by carefully screened private venture firms that will invest the funds and, if successful, return 100% of the principal and 80% of the profits to the State's general fund. The remaining third of the *InvestMaryland* capital is largely allocated to direct investments by the state-run Maryland Venture Fund.

The Maryland Venture Fund is a regionally recognized leader in seed and early-stage investing and a national model for state-supported investment programs. With nearly two decades of experience and numerous successful investments, MVF invests in highly innovative technology companies across the full range of industry sectors including software, communications, cybersecurity and life sciences companies in the areas of healthcare IT, medical devices and diagnostics.

About DBED:

The Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development stimulates private investment and creates jobs by attracting new businesses, encouraging the expansion and retention of existing companies, and providing workforce training and financial assistance to Maryland companies. The Department promotes the State's many economic advantages and markets local products and services at home and abroad to spur economic development and international investment, trade and tourism. Because they are major economic generators, the Department also supports the Arts, film production, sports and other special events. For more information, visit www.choosemaryland.org.



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Governor O'Malley Announces All Counties and Baltimore City have applied for State Funds to Repair Roads Damaged by Winter Weather

April 23rd, 2014

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Working to help local governments fix potholes and repair roadways damaged by this year's brutal winter weather, Governor Martin O'Malley today announced that all 23 Maryland counties and Baltimore City have applied for \$10 million in State funds by today's deadline. The funding, approved by Governor O'Malley and members of the General Assembly during the recent legislative session, is from Maryland's Transportation Trust Fund.

"It was a long, harsh winter for all of us, but in true Maryland spirit, State and local officials pulled together to ensure our roadways were safe and passable," said **Governor O'Malley**. "Unfortunately, our work is not done as crews continue to fill potholes and repair roadways damaged by the extreme weather conditions. I'm proud that my colleagues in the General Assembly worked closely with us to secure this funding to help local jurisdictions repair their roadways and continue efforts to enhance traffic safety for Maryland motorists."

To be eligible to participate in the one-time transportation grant program, all County Governments and Baltimore City were required to apply for the funding by April 23 and to agree to use their grant solely for repairs to local roads damaged by the recent winter weather. With all jurisdictions having applied, the funding from the Transportation Trust Fund now will be split among the 24 jurisdictions based on the number of roadway miles maintained by each local government. The State funds will be distributed over the next few weeks.

A full list of the County / City roadway mileage and how much each jurisdiction will receive is attached: [\\$10M Allocation List.pdf](#)







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Governor O'Malley Issues Statement on the Passing of Dr. Torrey C. Brown

April 24th, 2014

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor O'Malley issued the following statement upon learning of the death of former State Delegate and Natural Resources Secretary Dr. Torrey C. Brown:

"On behalf the citizens of Maryland – especially those who, like me, have a passion for our great outdoors – I offer our deepest condolences to the family of Torrey Brown. As leader of the House Environmental Matters Committee and later, the Department of Natural Resources, as co-founder of the Oyster Recovery Partnership and member of many health and environmental charitable boards and commissions, Torrey was one of a kind. He served our community – locally and globally – with tireless energy, passion, wisdom and a sense of humor that was truly unmatched. Today, as we mourn his loss, we also celebrate his life and the significant contributions he made on behalf of our citizens and our planet."

Note: The [following order](#) has been posted on the Secretary of State's website:

This is to advise you that Governor Martin O'Malley has ordered the Maryland State Flag to be flown at half-staff over the Maryland State House and at all Maryland Department of Natural Resources Facilities until sunset on Friday, April 25, 2014. This is in honor of Torrey Brown, the former Secretary of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, who died on April 20, 2014. This action is taken under the Protocol for the United States and Maryland State Flag. Any questions on the above should be directed to the Office of the Secretary of State.



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Governor O'Malley Issues Statement on the Passing of Former Baltimore City Schools Superintendent Walter Amprey

April 24th, 2014

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor O'Malley issued the following statement on the death of former Baltimore City Schools Superintendent Walter Amprey:

"Our entire State mourns the loss of an icon in the education world, Dr. Walter G. Amprey. As a teacher, principal and administrator, Dr. Amprey touched many lives at every level of our education system and beyond, instilling a resolute belief in our community's ability to foster the next generation of great leaders. Even after his retirement from the school system, Dr. Amprey dedicated his time as a mentor, businessman and philanthropist, bringing Marylanders across our State together as an inseparable family around causes critical to our collective future. I, along with many around our State, offer our deepest condolences to the family of former Superintendent Amprey."



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Governor Martin O'Malley and Media Rights Capital Announce House of Cards Will Film Season Three in Maryland

April 25th, 2014

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor Martin O'Malley and Media Rights Capital announced today that they have reached an agreement that will keep the hit television show House of Cards filming its third season in Maryland.

"Spoiler alert: we're going to keep the 3700 jobs and more than 100 million dollars of economic activity and investment that House of Cards generates right here in Maryland," Governor O'Malley said. "Media Rights Capital has been a great supporter of the people and entertainment community in Maryland and we couldn't be happier to continue our partnership."

The Maryland General Assembly first passed the Film Production Tax Credit in 2011, providing \$26 million in tax credits in the show's first two seasons. With the growth of the production, House of Cards will receive a total of \$11.5 million in 2014, through a combination of both the 2014 Film Production Tax Credit program and a General Assembly authorization of \$7.5 million in grants in the FY15 budget. Governor O'Malley led negotiations with MRC to finalize the agreement, which provides less than the production qualified for, but enough to keep the hit franchise in Maryland.

"House of Cards is the gift that keeps on giving, having injected hundreds of millions of dollars into the local economy, while also helping to provide thousands of jobs to our Maryland community," commented Asif Satchu, co-CEO of MRC. "We are very grateful to both Governor O'Malley for his tireless efforts to help keep jobs in Maryland and the leadership of the General Assembly for their continued advocacy and support."

The producers of the show expect to begin production on Season 3 over the next several months.



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Governor O'Malley Announces Strategic Demolition and Smart Growth Impact Fund Awards

April 28th, 2014

BALTIMORE, MD – Governor Martin O'Malley today announced the projects that will benefit from the State's Strategic Demolition and Smart Growth Impact Fund. Joined by Baltimore City Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development Deputy Secretary Clarence J. Snuggs, local officials, and representatives of community development organizations around Maryland, Governor O'Malley announced the awards at the site of the former Old Town Mall in Baltimore, one of the projects receiving Impact Fund assistance for demolition and redevelopment.



"Over the last seven years, we've made the better choice to use strategic tools like the Impact Fund and the Sustainable Communities Act to reinvest in Maryland's towns and cities to revitalize neighborhoods, spur economic growth, and improve the quality of life for more residents," said **Governor O'Malley**. "We do better when we're all doing better, and this funding builds on wide variety efforts to strengthen communities and support smart, sustainable projects like the redevelopment of Old Town Mall right here in Baltimore City and across our great State."

Located just blocks away from Baltimore's Inner Harbor, the Old Town Mall

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commercial district dates back to the early settlement of the city. Recently, the Baltimore Development Corporation and the Housing Authority of Baltimore City jointly issued a Request For Proposals for redevelopment of the 17-acre site to create a mixed-use, mixed-income commercial development. The \$300,000 grant through the Impact Fund will allow the demolition of the 14 vacant buildings in the 400 block of the mall.

"The revitalization of Old Town Mall and the former Somerset Public Housing site provides a tremendous development opportunity to include retail and housing," said **Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake**. "The joint RFP issued by BDC and Baltimore Housing represents a coordinated approach between City agencies to maximize the opportunity for the Old Town community. The proximity to Johns Hopkins Hospital, downtown, and key arts and cultural destinations make this a desirable location."

In addition to Old Town Mall, 13 projects throughout the state will receive \$5 million in assistance from the Impact Fund. These funds are projected to leverage an additional \$292 million in public and private investments to support revitalization activities. For this fiscal year, the Department received approximately \$13.5 million in funding requests for 30 projects.

Established in 2012 and administered by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, the Strategic Demolition and Smart Growth Impact Fund program is part of the state's PlanMaryland strategy to accelerate economic revitalization of designated Sustainable Communities through coordinated investment and alignment of public resources to leverage private investment. The program provides grants and loans to local governments and nonprofit community development organizations working in conjunction with private entities to fund capital costs for redevelopment opportunities in Sustainable Communities. Sustainable Communities are areas identified by local governments as being in need of revitalization and where the state and its local partners have agreed to concentrate growth and development and leverage scarce state revitalization resources.

"Before redevelopment, there is often pre-development, and the Strategic Demolition and Smart Growth Impact Fund is a valuable tool for pre-development demolition and land assembly," said **Deputy Secretary Snuggs**. "These awards provide a critical push to get the ball rolling in order to attract the necessary public and private investment for revitalization projects that improve Maryland's communities."

Projects receiving Impact Fund assistance will meet multiple economic development and smart growth goals in keeping with Maryland's Smart, Green & Growing initiative, including:

- Development at State-designated Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) sites;
- Stronger local economies in existing communities;
- Increased local jobs and services;
- Compact growth and mixed-use development;
- Expanded housing choices for people of all economic backgrounds; and
- Development practices that protect the environment and conserve air, water and energy resources, encourage walkability and recreational opportunities, and where available, create better access to transit.

The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development works with partners to finance housing opportunities and revitalize great places for Maryland citizens to live, work and prosper. To learn more about DHCD programs, log on <http://www.mdhousing.org>. To learn more, follow [Community Review](#), DHCD's blog. News updates also are available by following DHCD on Twitter (<http://twitter.com/MDHousing>) Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/MarylandHousing>).

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Governor O'Malley Releases Statement on Supreme Court Decision Upholding Major Rule to Address Air Pollution

April 29th, 2014

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor Martin O'Malley released the following statement on today's U.S. Supreme Court decision upholding the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Cross-State Air Pollution Rule, which addresses air pollution from power plants that contributes to unhealthy air in Maryland and other downwind states:

"By making better choices, we have significantly reduced air pollution generated within Maryland's borders. Now, the air pollution that blows into Maryland from states upwind of us must be cut to protect the health of our citizens. Today's Supreme Court ruling upholding EPA's Cross-State Air Pollution Rule is a critical step forward in achieving this important goal.

In Maryland, we have implemented strong programs such as the Healthy Air Act and the Clean Cars Program. Our efforts to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to Climate Change will also help improve our air quality. However, as much as 70 percent of the ozone air pollution in Maryland comes from upwind states – and ozone transported into the State has been measured at levels that already violate health-based standards. The science clearly demonstrates that Maryland cannot fully meet the air quality standards that protect public health unless air pollution generated outside of our State's borders is controlled.

The 2012 ruling by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia vacating the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule was disappointing, as it dealt a significant blow to our ongoing efforts to improve the quality of our air in Maryland. Maryland and other downwind states were parties in support of EPA in the case in both the lower court and in the Supreme Court. Maryland is also among a group of Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states that petitioned EPA to require upwind states to reduce emissions that contribute to the formation of ozone in Maryland and other downwind states.

It is time for the upwind states to do the right thing. We look forward to working with them – and to a future with cleaner, healthier air."



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Governor O'Malley and Lt. Governor Brown Highlight Commonwealth Fund Report Showing Maryland's Health Care Progress

April 30th, 2014

ANNAPOLIS, MD – The Commonwealth Fund, a private foundation based in New York, issued a report today comparing local, state, and national health systems. The report highlights the substantial progress Maryland has made over the last five years.

The report, "[Aiming Higher: Results from a Scorecard on State Health System Performance, 2014](#)," is a report card on U.S. state health systems, based on a comprehensive analysis of access and affordability, prevention and treatment, healthy lives, and avoidable hospital use and cost. The report states that Maryland is one of only four states that "stand out for their net improvement across indicators." The State improved in fourteen indicators, while only four indicators deteriorated, making Maryland only one of two states to have a +10 differential. Additionally, Maryland was one of five states that improved on ten or more indicators of health equity, rising from a rank of 30 to a rank of 12.

"Through better choices, Maryland continues to make great strides in health care and in bringing low-cost, high quality coverage to more Marylanders," said **Governor Martin O'Malley**. "Today's news shows a lot of improvement, but our work is far from finished. We are focused on strengthening Maryland's middle class, and helping to lift families out of poverty — continuing to ensure that more Marylanders have access to quality, affordable health coverage is a key ingredient of that effort."

"The foundation of strong communities are healthy families, and we've been working to expand access quality, affordable health care throughout our state so that Maryland remains a great place to live, work, and raise a family," said **Lt. Governor Anthony Brown**. "Through innovative efforts like our Health Enterprise Zone program, we've been bringing resources to the neighborhoods that need them most, working each and every day to ensure that no Marylander is forced to choose between seeing a doctor and providing for their family."

The State also ranks in the top five for: (1) the lowest percentage of adults who went without care because of cost in the last year; (2) fewest at-risk adults without a

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routine doctor visit in the last two years; (3) fewest long-term nursing home residents with an antipsychotic medication; and (4) fewest number of adults who smoke. Overall, Maryland now ranks 17 in the nation, up from a ranking of 24 in the nation five years ago.

"This report highlights the progress Maryland has made in health," said **Dr. Joshua M. Sharfstein, Secretary of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene**. "Our actions today are setting the stage for even greater improvement over the next five years."

Today's news comes on the heels of the State's recent efforts to reform health care in Maryland. Nearly 329,000 Marylanders enrolled in health coverage through the Affordable Care Act as of April 14, 2014, exceeding the State's goal of 260,000 enrollments by more than 26 percent. Additionally, the O'Malley-Brown Administration implemented a new model for hospital payments in early 2014 in which Maryland hospitals will be financially rewarded for keeping people out of the hospital. The plan was called "the boldest proposal in the United States in the last half century to grab the problem of cost growth by the horns." Through these better choices, Maryland is poised to keep doing better and getting healthier.

Note: The O'Malley-Brown Administration continues to make strides in health care in Maryland. Governor O'Malley has set [16 strategic goals](#) for the State. Among others, the State is on track to meet the goals to [reduce preventable hospitalizations by 10 percent by the end of 2015](#) and [reduce infant mortality in Maryland by 10 percent by 2017](#). Additionally, the O'Malley-Brown Administration has embraced [CRISP](#), Maryland's statewide health information exchange (HIE). CRISP's Regional Extension Center for Health IT and HIE efforts serve to advance health and wellness of Marylanders by helping healthcare providers to use EHRs in a meaningful way and enabling those providers to share clinical data with other providers and hospital systems across the State.



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