

LEGISLATURE

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JOSEPH R. BYRNES, President of the Senate
 C. FERDINAND SYBERT, Speaker, House of Delegates

The legislative powers of the State of Maryland are vested in the General Assembly which consists of two distinct branches, the Senate and the House of Delegates (Const. 1867, Art. III, sec. 1). The General Assembly at the present time consists of 152 members: 29 Senators and 123 members of the House of Delegates. Each County and each of the six Legislative Districts of the City of Baltimore is entitled to one Senator. The members of the House of Delegates are elected by Counties and the number of Delegates from each County is determined by its population.

Counties having a population of	
less than 18,000.....	2 delegates
18,000-28,000	3 delegates
28,000-40,000	4 delegates
40,000-55,000	5 delegates
55,000-and over	6 delegates

Each of the Legislative Districts of Baltimore City is entitled to the number of delegates accorded the most populous county of the State (III, 2, 4).

Every Senator or Delegate must be a citizen of the State, and a resident of it for at least three years preceding the date of his election and the last year thereof, he must have resided in the County or Legislative District of Baltimore City from which he has been elected. A Senator must be at least twenty-five years of age at the time of his election and a Delegate at least twenty-one. No member of Congress or any person holding a civil or military office under the United States Government nor any clergyman or minister shall be eligible for election to the General Assembly (III, 9, 10, 11). The term of each Senator and Delegate shall be for four years from the date of his election (XVII). All vacancies occurring in either House through death, resignation or disqualification shall be filled by the Governor, who shall appoint a person whose name is submitted to him in writing by the State Central Committee of the party to which the person holding the vacated seat belonged, and the person appointed must be affiliated with that party. All persons so appointed shall serve for the unexpired portion of the term (III, 13, amended November 1936). Each House shall elect its own officers and shall be judge of its own members and shall establish rules for the conduct of its business.

The General Assembly meets bi-ennially on the first Wednesday of January in each odd number year (XVII, 6). Each session is limited to ninety days. The Governor may convene the General Assembly in special or extraordinary session at any time he may deem it necessary.

The General Assembly is required to pass at each regular session a budget bill which shall contain the budget for the State Government for each of the fiscal years of the biennium. Upon the passage of the bill by both houses, it becomes law without further action (III, 52).