
HOUSE OF DELEGATES STANDING COMMITTEES

Following the practice of the English House of Commons, the Lower House of Maryland's General Assembly began to use standing (or continuing) committees in the seventeenth century. These committees were responsible for considering all proposed laws on a given subject. Any bills relating to their assigned subject matter received committee review before any final action on the floor. In 1692, the Lower House formed four standing committees on accounts; grievances; elections and privileges; and laws.

To review proposed legislation today, the House of Delegates has six standing committees: Appropriations; Commerce and Government Matters; Economic Matters; Environmental Matters; Judiciary; and Ways and Means. Two additional standing committees are Rules and Executive Nominations, and Consent Calendars.

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

Howard P. Rawlings, *Chairperson*
James E. McClellan, *Vice-Chairperson*

Low House Office Building, Room 131
6 Governor Bladen Blvd.
Annapolis, MD 21401 (410) 841-3407

The Appropriations Committee originated in 1692 as the Committee on Accounts. By the time of the Revolutionary War, it had become the Committee on Claims (upon the Treasury). The Claims Committee functioned from 1776 to 1968 when its responsibilities were shifted briefly to the Economic Matters Committee. In 1971, budgetary and other duties were assigned to the Appropriations Committee created in that year.

The Appropriations Committee considers legislation relating to budget; bonds and loans; collective bargaining; fiscal procedures; higher education; local government; Medicaid and other medical assistance; personnel matters; procurement; social services (Aid to Families with Dependent Children; welfare); special funds and grants; State government (legislative, executive, and judicial; sunset review); and transportation. Twenty-seven delegates serve on this committee.

Under the Committee are four subcommittees: Capital Budget; Education and Transportation; Health and the Environment; and Human Resources and Public Safety. The Committee also is aided by three oversight committees: Pensions; Personnel; and Program Open Space and Agricultural Land Preservation.

COMMERCE & GOVERNMENT MATTERS COMMITTEE

Gerald J. Curran, *Chairperson*
John F. Wood, Jr., *Vice-Chairperson*

Low House Office Building, Room 141
6 Governor Bladen Blvd.
Annapolis, MD 21401 (410) 841-3502

The Commerce and Government Matters Committee was created in January 1994. The Committee considers legislation relating to banking, credit unions, and savings and loans; election laws; ethics; local government; procurement; transportation; and vehicle laws. Twenty-two delegates serve on this committee.

ECONOMIC MATTERS COMMITTEE

Michael E. Busch, *Chairperson*
Elijah E. Cummings, *Vice-Chairperson*

Low House Office Building, Room 151
6 Governor Bladen Blvd.
Annapolis, MD 21401 (410) 841-3519

The Economic Matters Committee was formed in 1968. The Committee considers legislation relating to licensing and regulation; liquor laws; procurement; real estate and real property; unemployment insurance; vehicle laws; and workers' compensation. Twenty-four delegates serve on this committee.

ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS COMMITTEE

Ronald A. Guns, *Chairperson*
Virginia M. Thomas, *Vice-Chairperson*

Low House Office Building, Room 161
6 Governor Bladen Blvd.
Annapolis, MD 21401 (410) 841-3534

In 1969, the Environmental Matters Committee was established. Yet, earlier the House of Delegates had formed standing committees concerned with the environment. The Committee on Chesapeake Bay and its Tributaries, for example, had functioned from 1872 to 1968. Created in 1947, the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee also had continued until 1968, when the Natural Resources Committee briefly was established. In the following year, the Environmental Matters Committee assumed responsibilities of that committee.

The Environmental Matters Committee considers legislation relating to agriculture; business occupations; environment; fire and public safety; health—general (communicable diseases; developmental disabilities; family and child daycare; mental health; vital records); health—occupations; natural resources; Public Service Commission; and State government (commissions and task forces). This committee is composed of twenty-three delegates.