
BARRY GLASSMAN
HARFORD COUNTY EXECUTIVE



BILLY BONIFACE
DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION

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For more information, contact:

Cindy Mumby

Director of Governmental & Community Relations

410-340-5376

camumby@harfordcountymd.gov

Harford County Executive Glassman's State of the County Address: "Journey to Success"; Day of Remembrance for Sheriff's Deputies

BEL AIR, Md., (Jan. 10, 2017) - In his State of the County Address entitled "Journey to Success," Harford County Executive Barry Glassman measured success both in terms of the county's strengthening financial position and in the number of lives touched by his administration. For the coming year, Mr. Glassman announced plans to resurrect a job-promoting road project in Perryman and to continue reinvesting in the people who provide vital public services. He also declared a day of remembrance for two sheriff's deputies murdered in the line of duty. The annual address to the County Council and the public on Tuesday, January 10, also marked the midpoint of County Executive Glassman's term in office.

Citing his administration's core values of fiscal responsibility and balance, efficiency, customer service, innovation, accountability and transparency, County Executive Glassman began, "I am proud to report that Harford County continues to grow stronger each year as we move forward together."

Yet as with any journey, he said, there are events that "darken our path." The murder of Harford County Sheriff's Office Senior Deputy Patrick Dailey and Deputy First Class Mark Logsdon on February 10, 2016, he said, "brought violence beyond belief to our community and changed Harford County forever."

Declaring a day of remembrance, County Executive Glassman said, "As dark as those days following were, the County's love and generosity never shined so bright. As February 10th approaches, I will be signing a formal declaration setting that day as an official Day of Remembrance with a moment of silence at 12-noon as the County's emergency siren system is activated to honor Pat and Mark."

Regarding the county's finances, he said that revenue in fiscal year 2016 grew by almost 3.5%, while expenditures grew by 0.5%: "Over the past two years the County's financial position has strengthened. Revenue growth has returned, while expenditures are held in check. The fund balance increased. Debt burdens have stabilized and will begin moving in a downward trajectory as the capital budget shrinks. All of this is why the County has maintained its AAA bond rating ..." This highest possible rating recently allowed for the lowest cost of borrowing in county history.

Although debt levels were being reined in, County Executive Glassman said that key projects, including storm water remediation and a new Havre de Grace Middle/High School, would proceed.

Thanks to cost-cutting and his conservative approach to budgeting, he said that he also planned to continue reinvesting in people whose work improves the quality of life in Harford County:

"...we have budgeted over \$13.2 million dollars for employee salary increases over the past two years including teachers, sheriff's personnel, and county employees - all without raising taxes. This reinvestment in people is more than the total of the seven years prior to my administration. My intention is to continue a measured approach to building back salary levels for employees who provide vital public services. However, we cannot simply restore pay levels overnight from years of deferral while continuing to absorb increased health care costs which are estimated at 10% again this year, and add to the difficulty of increases. We are fortunate to offer our employees and the sheriff's personnel one of the best benefit packages in the region. Last year, we were able to fund increases for county employees through our cost cutting and directed all new revenue to the Board of Education. We continue to fund our education system above Maintenance of Effort and rank in the top half of Maryland counties for percentage of local share given to education."

Highlighting economic development, he noted that Harford County ranked second in the state for job creation in the last fiscal year. Over the past two years, nearly 1,500 new jobs were added in the county, along with \$228 million dollars in capital investment bringing diverse business activity into more than 3.2 million square feet of industrial, office, commercial and retail space.

Looking to the year ahead, County Executive Glassman announced the following new initiatives:

To boost job creation and economic activity, Harford County will build the long-awaited Perryman roundabout at Md. Route 159 and Perryman Road. Delayed many years for lack of state funding, this essential project will instead be funded by federal revenue to the county known as “payments in lieu of taxes,” or PILOT. The \$2 million investment will improve access to the Perryman peninsula, a premier location for major distribution centers and the growing e-commerce sector;

To save future generations and help current addicts, funding will be increased to \$250,000 in next year’s recommended budget for heroin treatment and prevention;

To preserve the county’s agricultural heritage, a 33% increase in agricultural land preservation funding will be recommended, plus a signing bonus to protect acreage near rural village centers;

To safeguard the county’s history, the administration will seek a certified historic preservation program;

To maintain high standards of public safety in EMS services, County Executive Glassman also proposed:

- Creating a dedicated county medical director within the Department of Emergency Services;
- Phasing out funding for chase cars and deploying two county-owned and staffed Advanced Life Support Surge Ambulances to provide an additional safety net, not to compete with dispatched VFC units;

- Creating a County EMS Standards Board to begin the complex planning for a phased-in transition to county-staffed units in service areas which may require supplementation.

He added, "I want to reassure our Volunteer Fire Companies that have successful Company EMS programs that we value your service and do not intend on replacing them. This process may take several years to complete but it is time we begin the hard work of formal planning and necessary approvals."

County Executive Glassman also recognized citizens in the audience who made outstanding contributions in the past year. Mara Finnegan, Jade Buddenbohn, and Alayna Beck, three girls who tragically lost a loved one to heroin and courageously stepped forward in public service announcements to prevent drug abuse among their peers. Their PSAs were seen by over 200,000 movie-goers last year. He also thanked the family of the late state Sen. Bob Hooper, whose property sale allowed the county to finally connect the separate sections of the highly popular Ma & Pa Heritage Trail.

In closing, County Executive Glassman thanked county employees and reflected on the personal aspects of his job:

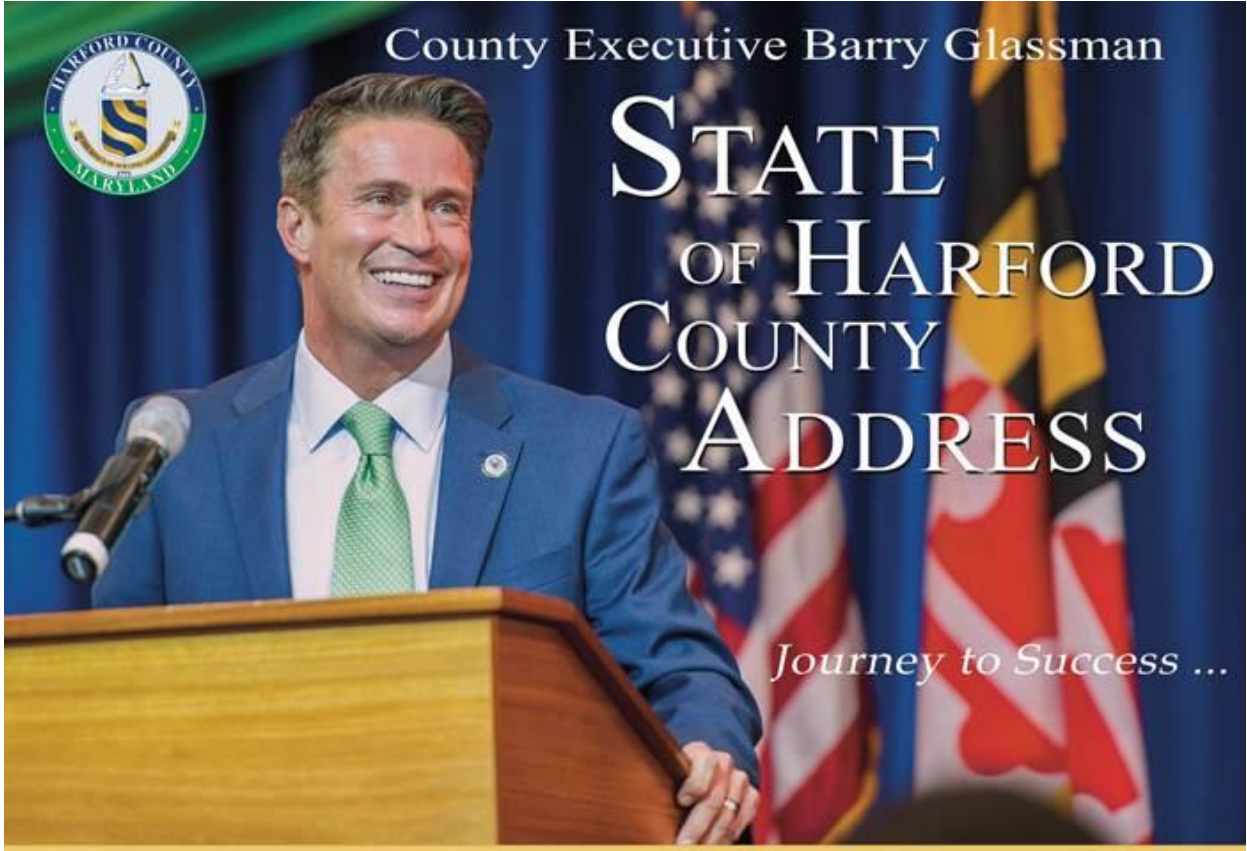
"As much as I love policy work, I remind myself each day to smile, touch someone, make a difference in their life, whether through our charity efforts, helping families with afterschool care, housing, and in all we do...President Eisenhower often said, 'Your accomplishments will prove to be your journey and not a destination' ...Thank you for the opportunity to lead this County on this journey. Continue to pray for me and my family and may God bless you and Harford County in the coming year."

A brief video review of 2016 entitled "Journey to Success" can be found here:

<http://www.harfordcountymd.gov/1826/State-of-the-County-Addresses>

A more detailed review of the Glassman administration's achievements in 2016 can be found here: <http://www.harfordcountymd.gov/DocumentCenter/View/8183>

The complete text of County Executive Glassman's State of the County Address can be found here: <http://www.harfordcountymd.gov/DocumentCenter/View/8263>



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STATE
OF HARFORD
COUNTY
ADDRESS

Journey to Success ...

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