

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 Recommends FY 19 Budget With No Tax Increases,
Record Investments in Public Safety, Education, Libraries**

BEL AIR, Md., (April 16, 2018) - Harford County Executive Barry Glassman released his FY 19 budget today recommending no increases in tax rates and record-level investments in public safety, education, and libraries. The final budget of the county executive's first term also doubles funding to fight the opioid epidemic, increases school security measures, and invests a record \$22 million to protect land from future development. The capital budget funds ongoing projects for the Ma & Pa Trail and the new Havre de Grace Middle/High School.

"I began my term leading Harford County on a new path to fiscal balance and efficiency because I've always believed that if you want to lift someone up, you've got to be on higher ground," County Executive Barry Glassman said. "While this path has not always been easy, it has allowed my administration to direct a total of nearly \$38 million over the past four years toward reinstating salary increases for our teachers, law enforcement and dedicated county employees, without raising taxes. We have done all this at the same time we have restored our unassigned fund balance, maintained the county's AAA bond rating and implemented the county's first property tax credit for qualifying seniors and military retirees."

The \$571,575,000 general fund operating budget proposal directs 100% of new, ongoing revenue to education and public safety; nearly \$1.2 million of which is committed to keeping children safe in Harford County Public Schools. To fight the opioid epidemic, county funding is more than doubled over current levels and includes funds toward the county's first 24-hour crisis center for mental health and addiction. County Executive Glassman established the county's first funding for opioid prevention and treatment in the first budget of his term. The new crisis center is planned in partnership with University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Health, the Harford County Health Department and Healthy Harford.

As a sign of the recovering local real estate market, the FY 19 budget invests a record \$22 million from local dedicated transfer tax revenue in Harford County's agricultural land preservation program. This program protects farmland from future development.

The proposed \$166,130,000 capital budget for FY 19 funds county road and bridge projects, stormwater remediation, priority repairs and life safety equipment requested by Harford County's volunteer fire companies, and funds ongoing projects to connect the Ma & Pa Trail and build the new Havre de Grace Middle/High School.

The total budget proposal for FY 19 is \$899,557,025. Highlights appear below:

Restoring Balance & Efficiency

No tax increases

100% of new, ongoing FY 19 revenue dedicated to education and public safety

County government efficiencies help fund other operations

Unassigned fund balance more than doubled over the last three years

AAA bond rating lowers borrowing costs; rating maintained due to strong management and realistic Capital Improvement Program

Reinvesting in our Workforce

2% COLA for all county employees plus a \$2,000 merit-based increase to the base salary per qualifying employee

Equivalent increases for State's Attorney and Circuit Court employees

Merit-based increase will have greater impact on lower-salaried workers

Funding equivalent to a 3% salary increase for Library employees; sets record-level funding for Harford County Public Library

\$2.8 million to fully fund the Sheriff's Office's request for salary increases; totals \$5.3 million over the last two years

\$122,472 for the new Sheriff's Office Cadet Program

Investing in Education

Record-level funding continues for Harford County Public Schools:

\$245,815,645 in FY 19 operating funds for HCPS; total increase of \$7.1 million over FY 18

\$6.4 million of the total increase dedicated to raising instructional salaries, continuing our support for teachers

\$400,000 to Harford Community College for the county's traditional 1/3 share of funding to support staff salary increases

Strengthening Communities

Preventing and treating opioid addiction:

County funding **more than doubled** to \$610,000

Includes \$250,000 toward the county's first 24-hour crisis center for mental health & addiction

Historic-level funding for our first responders:

\$6,964,084 Volunteer Fire Companies; represents a 3% increase over FY 2018

\$3,546,668 EMS Foundation

\$1,589,118 County EMS Service

Keeping our children safe in school:

\$773,000 to expand existing School Resource Officer Program to remaining middle schools

\$325,000 to fully fund requested school security camera upgrades

\$100,000 ongoing annual funding to improve radio communications in schools

Agricultural preservation:

Record-level funding of **\$22 million** from revenue dedicated to preserving agricultural land

Support for Community Organizations:

Harford County Humane Society

Harford Center

The Arc Northern Chesapeake

Capital Project Highlights

\$15.2 million - County road and bridge projects

\$11.4 million - Stormwater remediation projects

\$24.5 million - Water & sewer infrastructure reinvestments

\$1.6 million - Volunteer Fire Company priority repairs and life safety equipment; includes Whiteford and Joppa/Magnolia VFC renovations

\$1 million - HCPS school technology

Ma & Pa Trail connection - continued funding

Havre de Grace Middle/High School - continued construction on \$100 million project

Patterson Mill Middle/High School - begin funding for artificial turf field

Fallston Middle School chiller replacement

Aberdeen Middle School roof replacement

HCPS swimming pool renovations - continued funding

In a budget message released earlier today, County Executive Glassman concluded: "I would like to thank the many citizens who shared their budget priorities with me through our fourth annual virtual town hall meeting. These priorities helped to shape my budget priorities. I would also like to thank my Director of Administration Billy Boniface, our hardworking budget team and our county employees who are dedicated each day to serving our customers, the citizens of Harford County."

The county executive's recommended FY 19 budget must be approved by the County Council.

The complete budget proposal is published on the county website at

<http://www.harfordcountymd.gov/1531/Budget-and-Management-Research>.

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