



BARRY GLASSMAN

HARFORD COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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Harford County Executive Glassman Announces Fiscal Year 20 Budget: Record Investments in Education and Public Safety; No Tax Increases

County and State Funding Exceed Board of Education's Budget Request

BEL AIR, Md., (April 15, 2019) - Harford County Executive Barry Glassman released his fiscal year 2020 budget today and issued the following statement:

"In this first budget of my second term, we are building on our success in Harford County with record-level funding for education and public safety, without raising tax rates. In fact, in each of the past five years we have directed funds to restore salary increases for our teachers and law enforcement totaling \$38 million. At the same time, we have identified efficiencies within our budget to help restore salaries for our dedicated county employees. We have also maintained our AAA bond rating, which keeps borrowing costs low for vital capital projects such as roads, fire & EMS infrastructure, schools, parks, and recreational facilities. This progress was made possible by following our path to fiscal balance and responsibility in local government."

For the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2019, the county executive's proposed general fund operating budget is \$595,380,000.

County and state increases exceed school board's budget request

Operating funds budgeted at \$256,465,645 for Harford County Public Schools increase by \$10.7 million, the largest increase in a decade despite flat student enrollment. When combined with state funding increases, which were not fully reported in the school system's budget, operating funding for FY 20 exceeds the Harford County Board of Education's request. County funding of \$10 million is directed by the county executive to raise instructional salaries and \$650,000 is to strengthen mental health services with added support for school psychologists. This significant funding increase from the county also qualifies HCPS to apply for state "Kirwan" grants to further increase teacher salaries.

Harford Community College's requested 2% increase is fully funded.

Historic-level funding for public safety

In accordance with the Harford County Sheriff's Office Pay Plan, one step increase and a 1% COLA are budgeted for law enforcement deputies and corrections officers in addition to support for Harford's volunteer fire companies (\$7,037,245, representing a 2% increase), the Harford County Volunteer Fire & EMS Foundation (\$4,196,668), and to fully staff two ambulances for the county's EMS service (\$2,165,168), supplementing VFC services. A contribution of \$250,000 is to assist Jarrettsville VFC with repairing its fire protection pond.

Continuing reinvestments in employees who provide vital public services

The county executive has budgeted a \$2,000 merit-based increase per qualifying Harford County government employee, and equivalent increases for employees in the State's Attorney's Office, Circuit Court, and for Sheriff's Office civilian employees. This \$2,000 increase will have a greater impact on lower-salaried workers.

Record-level funding to fight the opioid epidemic and support behavioral health

The county executive's budget dedicates a record \$1 million targeting the opioid epidemic and to support behavioral health. County funding increases to \$750,000 in FY 20 for treatment assistance, prevention, recovery coach training, the 24-hour hotline, and post-recovery support. To help families in crisis find services at any time of the day or night, funding of \$250,000 is

budgeted for the second phase of the 24-hour Harford County Crisis Center for Mental Health & Addiction in Bel Air.

Strengthening community organizations

Support for community organizations continues with increased funding for the Harford County Humane Society, Harford Center, and The Arc Northern Chesapeake Region. New this year, the Havre de Grace Colored School Foundation is budgeted to receive \$250,000 toward a planned museum and cultural center; and the Miracle League of Harford County is slated for \$250,000 to build a specially adapted baseball field at Schucks Road Regional Park in Bel Air.

“I am proud to support the Havre de Grace Colored School Foundation and its mission to remember, promote and preserve the school’s rich history and legacy,” County Executive Glassman said. “We are also proud to assist the nonprofit Miracle League of Harford County, because every child should have a chance to play ball.”

Capital projects

The proposed \$155,966,000 capital budget includes \$42.8 million for eleven projects requested by Harford County Public Schools. They include final funding for the \$100 million Havre de Grace Middle/High School; HVAC systemic renovations for George D. Lisby and Roye Williams elementary schools; roof replacements for Aberdeen Middle and Hickory Elementary; repairs to the North Bend Elementary School central plant and fire alarm system; funds to replace special education buses, and continued funding for technology, swimming pool renovations, security measures, and athletic fields.

Public safety capital projects totaling nearly \$12 million are for volunteer fire company priority repairs and life safety equipment, including renovations for Whiteford and Aberdeen VFCs; a multi-agency public safety mobile command center; construction of a county EMS station; funds to support Next-Gen 911 technology and upgrade the mobile/portable radio system, and funds to upgrade public safety radio communications in school buildings.

Other essential capital projects include \$28.5 million for county road and bridge projects; \$10.9 million for stormwater remediation projects; \$6 million to complete the Ma & Pa Trail connection; \$4.7 million in water & sewer infrastructure reinvestments; \$2.5 million to support

sports tourism through improvements to parks & recreation playing surfaces, including Cedar Lane Sports Complex, and \$2.1 million for comprehensive upgrades to the Chesapeake Center at Harford Community College.

The county executive's total budget proposal for FY 20 is \$903,614,125. The budget is published on the county website at <http://www.harfordcountymd.gov/1531/Budget-and-Management-Research>.

County Executive Glassman concluded, "I would like to thank the many citizens who shared their budget priorities with me through our fifth annual virtual town hall meeting. These priorities helped to shape my budget priorities for next year. I would also like to thank Director of Administration Billy Boniface, our award-winning budget team and our county employees who work hard each day to serve you, our fellow citizens of Harford County."

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