



## ROBERT G. CASSILLY

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### Harford County Executive

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jan. 12, 2024

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### **Harford's Cassilly Delivers State of the County Address: Redirecting Government to Serve People; No Tax Increases, Public Safety Upgrades, New County Parks**

**BEL AIR, Md.**, (Jan. 12, 2024) - County Executive Bob Cassilly on Thursday delivered his second annual State of Harford County Address since taking office in December of 2022. Focusing on his commitment to government that serves the people, the county executive highlighted budget efficiencies and public safety improvements and announced major additions to the county's park system.

Regarding the budget, County Executive Cassilly said his administration had saved \$10 million thus far through procurement best practices and negotiation. He pledged not to raise taxes while working to fund competitive salaries for sheriff's deputies, correctional officers, and county employees. In FY 2025, he said he hoped to provide increased funding to the school system and sheriff's office at a reasonable 5% growth rate, in line with current estimates of the county's revenue growth.

Citing public safety as his top priority, County Executive Cassilly said,

"I am very proud of the fact that over the past 10 months, my administration responded effectively to a crisis in our volunteer ambulance service. As you already know, just about a month into my administration, our volunteers informed my administration that the volunteer ambulance service could not continue to function, and their duties needed to be taken over by the county. In short order, my administration recruited and hired full time EMS personnel,

purchased equipment and created workstations and bunkrooms for 14 ambulance crews that are now stationed throughout the county.”

Harford Executive Cassilly also thanked all former EMS volunteers for their years of dedication to saving lives and recognized volunteer Dottie Arnold, president of the Harford County Fire & EMS Foundation, for her amazing 45+ years of service.

Reflecting his pledge to redirect government to serve the people, County Executive Cassilly announced the acquisition of nearly 130 acres of environmentally sensitive land in Joppatowne that had been slated for 232 single family homes. The property will instead be designated as county parkland.

The county executive also announced the purchase of additional acreage on the Oakington Peninsula, located between Havre de Grace and Aberdeen, that will become part of a 1,200-acre park system including two miles of waterfront.

“We are still in the planning stages but it is clear that the park complex has the potential for a system of waterfront trails and other uses that will make it a crown jewel in the mid-Atlantic region,” he said.

Economic development efforts are being redirected to attract emerging technologies, including bio-manufacturing, and well-paying jobs instead of allowing valuable commercial properties to be taken up by mega-warehouses. Support for small and minority-owned businesses includes low-interest loan programs and improved opportunities to compete for county contracts.

While recognizing fiscal challenges ahead, the county executive concluded his speech reflecting confidence in Harford’s future.

“I know that Harford County is up to this challenge - or any challenge. We just celebrated our 250th anniversary. To have made it through two and a half centuries, we must be doing something right.

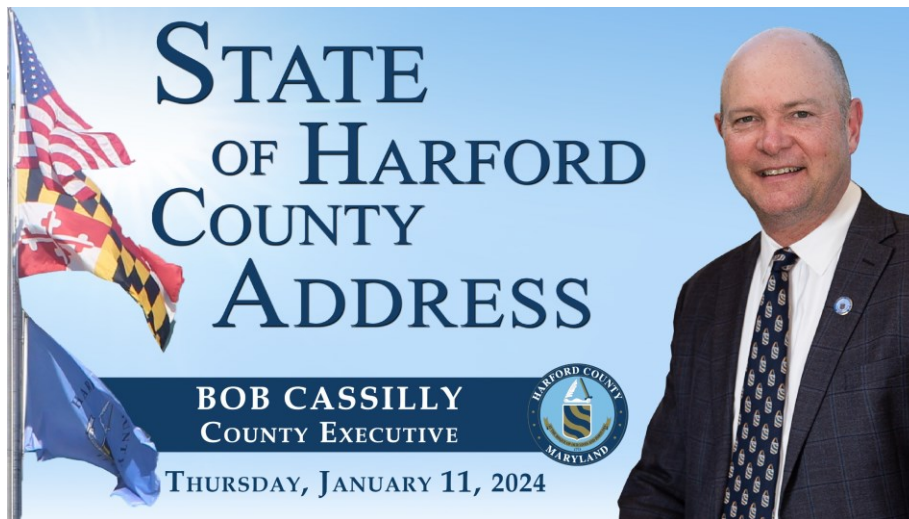
I’ve lived here all my life, and I think it’s this: just like a family, we may disagree from time to time, but we come together when it counts. Our personal connections are our superpower. We look out for one another and give a hand up when needed. We cherish our children and grandchildren. We sacrifice for them, and we work to make their future brighter than our own. That’s why I believe in Harford County, and I know that even after 250 years, our best days lie ahead.

Thank you. God bless you, and God bless Harford County.”

Prior to the speech, [a brief video highlighting County Executive Cassilly's first year in office](#) was presented to the council.


The county executive's full speech is published here

<https://www.harfordcountymd.gov/1826/38229/State-of-the-County-Addresses>.



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