

News Release

Board of Public Works Approves \$148.3 Million in Budget Reductions

Comptroller emphasizes the need to focus on healthcare and childcare to improve Maryland's economic health and future

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (July 17, 2023) — **Comptroller Brooke Lierman** voted today to approve **Governor Wes Moore's** \$148.3 million budget reduction proposal during a meeting of the Board of Public Works alongside Governor Moore and **Treasurer Dereck Davis**.

"As the state's elected Chief Financial Officer, I understand fully that making strategic but tough fiscal decisions such as the budget reductions presented today are necessary for preserving the state's fiscal health," Comptroller Lierman said.

Ahead of the critical vote, the Board of Public Works heard testimony from Marylanders supporting and in opposition to the cuts. Comptroller Lierman expressed her appreciation for Marylanders who reached out to her and the agency to share how spending reductions would affect them and their work. Comptroller Lierman commended Department of Budget Management **Secretary Helene T. Grady** for her transparency, continuous engagement, and partnership and invited her to provide additional clarity around the process of identifying and selecting areas for reduction.

Additionally, Comptroller Lierman highlighted the importance of preserving funding to support access to childcare and Medicaid programs here in Maryland. Earlier this year, the Office of the Comptroller published its first [State of the Economy](#) report, which found that Maryland's Labor Force Participation rate fell four percentage points during the pandemic, and more than 181,000 people had not returned to the workforce, with childcare and health issues cited as contributing factors.

"Revenues are relatively stagnant, and they have been for quite some time, but needs are growing, and we cannot meet those needs if revenues don't keep up. Revenues into the state increase when Maryland businesses are thriving, when more people are

working, when they're getting raises because our businesses are doing well," Comptroller Lierman explained.

"People can't work if they are sick and parents cannot work, or guardians or caregivers cannot work, the group cannot afford childcare for their children at home. So, these collective sacrifices that we are seeing today will allow the state to increase spending in our healthcare and childcare programs, and by investing in Maryland families, we will also grow our economy both in the near and long term."

The Board of Public Works also approved more than \$288 million for 105 initiatives and projects throughout Maryland.

Comptroller Lierman applauded the Maryland Transit Administration for the addition of 50 new hybrid-electric and 20 new battery-operated electric buses through an Intergovernmental Cooperative Purchase Agreement with The State of Washington. This was a direct result of MTA evaluating the state of good repair of their fleet, taking action to ensure the operational safety of their vehicles, and working to help the state reach its goal of reducing future greenhouse gas emissions by 40 percent from 2006 levels by 2030.

The summary figures for the Board of Public Works are as follows:

- Approved 105 items, representing a total State expenditure of \$288,332,985.49.
- Approved grant agreements for 21 recipients for 22 projects located in 5 counties and Baltimore City with a total value of \$23,085,000.
- 7 items awarding \$13,578,444.97 to prime certified small business primes.
- 2 items awarding \$10,196,286 to certified minority business enterprise primes.
- 1 item awarding \$203,947.43 to Employment Works Program providers.
- 8 items awarded with established participation goals for minority business enterprises.
- 1 item awarded with established participation goals for veteran-owned small business enterprises.

The next meeting of the Board of Public Works is August 7.

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