



Hello Justin:

## News from the General Assembly

Though the Maryland General Assembly is currently not in session, your legislators are still hard at work in Annapolis. Many of us are participating in workgroups and special committees to study specific issues and concerns in the State before the start of session in January. This year, I was honored to be appointed by the Speaker of the House, Michael E. Busch, to two important committees:

The *House Special Committee on Drug and Alcohol Abuse* meets during the legislative interim to study and make recommendations for legislation concerned with substance abuse. The committee will submit its final recommendations to the Speaker in December. We are currently reviewing a statewide needs assessment that was mandated by legislation passed during the 2008 session. The assessment, conducted by The Center for Substance Abuse Research (CESAR) at the University of Maryland, confirmed that *Prince George's County has the largest gap for people who need, but are not receiving treatment, in the state of Maryland.* For more information on this study, please click [here](#). For more information on this Special Committee, please click [here](#).

The *Joint Legislative Workgroup on State, County and Municipal Fiscal Relationships* is composed of both State Senators and Delegates. It has been trusted with the task of reviewing the primary revenue sources and expenditures of all levels of government in the State and the interrelation of these various factors. For example, we are looking at items like teacher's pensions, education aid, and police aid to counties and municipalities. For more information on this workgroup, and to view information presented during workgroup sessions, please click [here](#).

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## Summer Update

My favorite part about being an elected representative is having the opportunity to go out into the community and meet with my constituents. This summer I was happy to be able to participate in numerous community activities throughout District 22. In addition, I was able to host multiple events that allowed me to meet with you, my friends and neighbors, hear your concerns, and share some important information with you about our

State and County. Big thanks to everyone who made it out to some of the events this summer!

### ***Greenbelt Office Hours***

While the General Assembly is not in session, I make it a priority to hold informal "office hours" throughout District 22 so that residents may have a chance to meet with me one-on-one. On June 2nd, I had the opportunity to get together with residents at the Greenbelt Library to discuss legislation passed during the 2009 Session and answer questions. It was great to be able to talk directly with some of my constituents and listen to their concerns.

### ***Senior Day at the Movies***

On June 13th, I invited all Greenbelt senior citizens to attend a complimentary movie showing with me at the Old Greenbelt Theatre. One hundred people were able to attend our Saturday afternoon event.



### ***Book Reading at the Freedom School***

In July, I visited with the students at the Children's Defense Freedom Fund School at the Refreshing Spring Church of God in Riverdale. Hosted by Sowing Empowerment and Economic Development (SEED) Inc., the Freedom School program aims to boost the



motivation of elementary and middle school children to read and learn. During my visit, not only did I have the chance to read to the students, but I was also asked to participate in the "Harambee!" a 30-minute self and group-affirming celebration and preparation for the work ahead. I applaud the Freedom School for bringing such excitement and positivity to academic enrichment.

### ***Greenbelt Labor Day Parade***

This September, I again had the privilege of walking in the Greenbelt Labor Day Parade. The Parade is something I look forward to every year. It is always such an exciting event, and this year was certainly no exception. It was a blast to see so many familiar



faces and have the chance to meet new people from the district. Thanks again to all the volunteers who wore their red Ross shirts and walked with me in the Parade. For those who couldn't make it out, I look forward to seeing you next year!

### ***Seminar on Property Taxes and Home Assessments***

On September 24th I hosted a seminar for District 22, giving residents a chance to come and learn more about property taxes, home assessments, and property tax credits. Speakers from the [State Department of Assessment and Taxation](#) and the [Prince George's County Treasury](#) discussed the often complicated process of property taxes and assessments, and answered questions from the crowd. I am so pleased that over 250 people were in attendance. I hope everyone found the seminar to be helpful and informative. To read more about the event, please click [here](#). *If you weren't able to make it out for the seminar, please contact my office to request an information packet from the event.*

### ***Visit to Hyattsville Middle School***

On Wednesday, October 20th, I was able to visit with the eighth grade honors history classes at Hyattsville Middle School. The students and I had an open discussion about how the legislative process works here in Maryland and some of the important issues in Prince George's County and the State. As a legislator and life-long Prince George's resident, it was so exciting to see the young adults in my district engaged in a conversation about public leadership and policy. Much thanks to Hyattsville Middle for allowing me the opportunity to come to your school and meet with your wonderful students. I hope you are as proud of them as I am.

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## **Upcoming Events in District 22!**

### ***Monster Mash!***

Please join me for the 3rd Annual Monster Mash Halloween Party at University Park Elementary School on Friday, October 30th from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. It will be a frightfully fun time, filled with music, games and crafts. Holiday refreshments will be provided. Wear a costume and bring the family!



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## **Important Information**

### ***The Gates Millennium Scholar Program***

I am happy to inform you of a fantastic scholarship opportunity that was recently brought to my attention for African American, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian Pacific Islander American, and Hispanic American students with strong leadership skills. Graduating seniors and those applying to college for the first time, with a high school GPA of 3.3 or higher, are eligible to apply.

Please visit the Gates Millennium Scholar website at [www.gmsp.org](http://www.gmsp.org) for more information and to access the application form. **The submission deadline is January 11, 2010.**

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Please remember that I am always available to answer your questions and address your concerns. Never hesitate to contact my office by calling 301-858-3652 or emailing [justin.ross@house.state.md.us](mailto:justin.ross@house.state.md.us). I look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,

Justin Ross

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By Authority, Friends of Justin Ross, Jane Ross, Treasurer

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