





















could occur by attracting equity investors. The model was constructed with New Market Tax Credits, Federal Historic Tax Credits, State Historic Tax Credits, the Bridge Loan, and anticipated fundraising, and philanthropic and corporate contributions. With the return of the first-year funding level over the next two years, we will have a debt-free building in advance of federal funding scheduled to begin after the second year. Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you, Reverend.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: My dad had a great time at the opening, Reverend Hathaway.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Wonderful work. Thank you so much.

Next up, we'd like to welcome Brad Rogers, who is speaking in support of Item 17, which is an operating grant to the South Baltimore Gateway Partnership. Another great organization, great work. So Mr. Rogers, good to see you.

MR. ROGERS: Thank you. I'll be brief. I'm Brad Rogers, the Executive Director of the South Baltimore Gateway Partnership. We are very grateful for this funding, which we use to invest in the long-overlooked neighborhoods of South Baltimore as part of the Reimagine Middle Branch Project. Where we're transforming the Middle Branch of Patapsco into Baltimore's next great waterfront. Thank you so much.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Okay.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Please.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Thank you, Brad. I just wanted to thank you for your work. I think one of the things that I'm most proud of is my time as a delegate was working with Senate President Ferguson, Delegate Clippinger, and Delegate Lewis, and Delegate Hammond back in the day, to set up the South Baltimore Gateway Partnership. And you were instrumental in that

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from the very beginning -- you, and Ethan, and others. And so it's been really phenomenal to see the amount of work you've done -- the amount of work you've done and the impact that you've made in South Baltimore. And it's always a joy to be able to visit. So thanks so much for all you're doing. We're excited to see it continue.

MR. ROGERS: Thank you. And thank you for all your support.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thanks so much, Brad. Thank you.

We'll now hear from Wes Heinz, who's here to testify in support of Item 20 -- an operating grant to the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad. Is Wes -- there you go.

MR. GONTRUM: Hey, Wes.

MR. HEINZ: How are you?

GOVERNOR MOORE: Good to see you, Mr. Heinz. Sorry.

MR. HEINZ: Good morning, Governor Moore and Secretary Gontrum. First of all, thanks for giving me a couple of moments to speak. I'll be very brief. I do want to say thank you for the grant that you have in place currently for FY '25. Now, I can speak better. There we go. I just want to share a couple things for you guys to consider, what the railroad is doing for Western Maryland.

First of all, we were given an award through USA Today. We are the seventh out of about a hundred heritage railroads in the country. We are number seven in the United States, which is -- it says a lot about Mountain Maryland and about Maryland as a state itself. Also, we are going to be announcing that the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad will become the first heritage railroad in the United States to be certified as an autism center. We have just completed -- our entire staff had to go through a training matrix.

Some other things to consider, the railroad is going to see about

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85,000 people this year, which is turning over the population of Cumberland more than three times. So we will shuttle about 40,000 of them through Polar Express, which I know you're very familiar with. So we're very excited about the programs we're able to bring to the community. This last year, we actually were able to contribute back to the community, whether it was through philanthropy at the hospital, or through education, about \$100,000 in intangibles. So we appreciate the funding. We appreciate your support. And that's all I've got for you today.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Perfect. Thank you so much. And --

MR. HEINZ: Thank you very much.

GOVERNOR MOORE: -- we are proud of 85,000 visitors -- my family, myself and my family, were one of them. We were hanging out in pajamas on the Polar Express and had a wonderful time. And I'll say that I was -- everyone was walking around saying, "We love you, Wes. We love you, Wes." I was like, "Thank you so much, everybody." They're like, "No, we're talking about Heinz."

(Laughter.)

GOVERNOR MOORE: So really, really good work.

MR. HEINZ: And you're all welcome anytime.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Thank you

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you

MR. HEINZ: Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Mr. Secretary, I'd like to actually call up Item 38 now, which is a proposal from my Administration to reduce Fiscal Year 2025 appropriations by \$148.3 million. The State Finance and Procurement Article vests that this Board has the authority to consider and approve mid-year budget reductions proposed by the Governor and where such actions are necessary to safeguard the fiscal health for the State of Maryland. And I do want

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to be very clear, as we're opening up. My Administration did not come to these decisions lightly by any stretch of the imagination.

The proposal before the Board really is a product of thoughtful deliberation, countless hours of consideration, countless hours of debate, and a very careful review of various cost containment measures. We take this work seriously literally, going line-by-line throughout the entire budget. And what we are seeing here, these proposals, I want to be clear that the vast majority of these proposals are actually State government agencies. These are agencies that are doing the work every single day. So when we say that we're asking -- looking at these various cost containment measures, that this is across the board. This is the Governor's Office. This is all the agencies. It's the Comptroller's Office. Line-by-line, going over this budget to make sure that we can get it right and make sure we're protecting the fiscal health of our state, particularly at a time when we know how imperative and important to do so actually is. And so while it's never ideal, the reductions that we are advancing today are necessary to ensure that our fiscal stability is going to be sound and to create long-term economic growth for our state.

So I've been managing budgets for my entire career. I'm very accustomed to budgets. I'm very comfortable around them. Whether as a CEO of a small business or ran a large organization, I get how budgets work. And I also know this, is that when we took office 18 months ago, our team realized that Maryland's business model was broken. That's not politics, that's math. You cannot have something that continues to watch budgets increase, but where you're continuing to watch an economy stay flat. And so we've known for years that stagnant economic growth in Maryland has sustained over the past decade. And it was going to make it challenging for policymakers from both sides of the aisle to be able to confront the State's fiscal situation.

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During that period of time that we're talking about, the last seven years, we've seen how the State budget ballooned by over 70 percent, while the State's economy stayed flat at 3 percent. A budget increased by 70, an economy that moves at 3. And by the way, while the national economy was growing at 7 -- growing at 11 percent. Those numbers don't work. And it's created the kind of fiscal pressure and the kind of fiscal challenge that this Board, this Administration and, frankly, this state would have to be unafraid to be able to confront. Because that stagnant economic growth means that revenues are going into our coffers, but they did not keep pace with the growth of the State budget.

The Legislature was willing to work with the previous governor to make tough decisions, but oftentimes the open hand was met with a closed door. So under our Administration, in our first two budgets, we've worked in partnership with the General Assembly on both sides of the aisle to be able to reduce the size of the State's budget while making targeted strategic investments to grow our economy, to make our state more competitive, and to help make sure that we are creating long-term fiscal supports and fiscal health for our state for generations to come.

And among the investments we prioritize are two, healthcare and childcare. Because we know that when Marylanders have access to healthcare and also access to preventative care, and when families have access to affordable childcare, they are more likely to participate in our labor force and participate in our economy. And the key is we've got to have an economy where more people can participate. And by the way, being able to focus on healthcare, being able to focus on childcare is going to benefit Marylanders from Western Maryland to the Eastern Shore and to everywhere in between.

Because today more Marylanders have healthcare coverage than ever before with over 1.7 million Marylanders enrolled under Medicaid. And

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since taking office, we've increased the number of children -- of children enrolled in the State's Child Care Scholarship Program by 70 percent. That means an additional 16,000 kids are now receiving childcare scholarships. 16,000 children, and that allows their parents and caregivers to be able to join the workforce. Because we cannot be a state where we're asking people to make a choice between taking care of your children or joining the workforce.

And earlier this year, Comptroller Lierman published her Agency's State of the Economy Report. And this important report highlighted that as the cost of childcare increases, overall female employment decreases by 5 percent. So the historic investments that we have made in healthcare and in childcare are two of the largest drivers that have necessitated the actions that we're asking the Board to approve today. In protecting these two areas, we also needed to make hard decisions about how we invest elsewhere.

And so today, our Administration is doing what Marylanders are doing every single day. Because every single day Marylanders are making tough decisions. About how to spend what they have, about how to make sure that their budgets match their aspirations. And so we're making tough decisions about how we spend what we have. And that means that these are tough decisions, but it is showing what responsible governance looks like. And they will help us to unlock Maryland's promise.

These decisions are not easy. I understand that some of the trims and haircuts are happening to organizations that we believe in deeply and that we support and have been not just good to our State, but have been good to us personally. So I understand the difficulty of it, and I hope people also understand the difficulty about why these decisions had to be made. We've made progress, but the work is not done. Challenges that have been years in the making cannot be solved overnight. And frankly, the decisions being made today will not solve

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everything, but they are an important step.

Because today does mark an important step towards building a stronger foundation for all of Maryland. Making sure that we can get our fiscal house in order. And by leaning into our strengths, we won't just grow our economy, but we will build one that can be sustainable. We'll build one that can be inclusive. And we'll build one where every single part of our state can benefit from the idea that we have governance that sweats the details and that we have governance that's going to make sure that everybody is going to be seen and supported.

And so in closing, I'd like to thank Secretary Grady and her team for their tireless work, for sweating the details, for making sure that this proposal, while difficult, is the right one. And also, I want to thank my colleagues. I want to thank Comptroller Lierman. I want to thank Treasurer Davis. I want to thank their teams for their engagement and their partnership throughout this entire process. And so I respectfully ask the Board to approve this package in its entirety.

And with that, we'll move on to the speakers and some of them -- oh, please. Please. Yes.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Sorry, I just want to make a few comments first before we have --

GOVERNOR MOORE: Of course.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: I know we have --

GOVERNOR MOORE: Of course.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: -- a few speakers. So just before they come --

GOVERNOR MOORE: Please.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: -- I thought it appropriate. And

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thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Governor, today, the Board of Public Works is exercising one of its most important constitutional mandates to preserve the fiscal health of our state. And 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.

That said, I appreciate the Marylanders who have reached out to me in emails, texts, calls, and social media to express their views on this very important action we are taking today. I've also appreciated the calls with legislators that I've had discussing what this means. Nearly every State agency is impacted by these reductions, including my agency. I let my own team know last week about these cuts, which affect almost every division that was to receive much needed team members.

I want to thank Secretary Grady and her team for explaining these line items to me in great detail, for reviewing them with me, and going back and forth, and always being available to answer questions and hear my concerns or ideas. Most people that contacted me wanted more clarity about the process and specifically how the reductions we see today were the ones that were identified and who identified them, which I think are fair questions.

So I was hoping, Secretary Grady, that you might join us at the podium before people speak to talk with us a little bit about the decision-making process that culminated in the list today so that people can understand the methodical way that these decisions were reached. Thanks.

MS. GRADY: Good morning, Governor Moore, Comptroller Lierman, and Treasurer Davis. My name is Helene Grady, Secretary of Budget

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and Management. And thank you, Comptroller, for the question. And I should say I'm joined here with Marc Nicole, our Deputy Secretary, here to help us answer any questions you may have.

Before I answer your precise question, first, just quickly, I want to just recap again why we're bringing this package of actions to the BPW at this time and what the package represents. This proposal before the BPW is an important step to maintain a balanced budget through targeted reductions in Fiscal '25. As the Governor described, this follows on a series of targeted reductions in the Governor's original Fiscal '25 budget as we work to realign spending within a relatively stagnant revenue base that we inherited, while also making critical strategic investments in our most core priorities. This is a proactive step to position us well as we navigate the months ahead.

At this point, we anticipate needing to add appropriation to our Medicaid and childcare scholarship budgets in Fiscal '25 given our Agency's success with ensuring that eligible families are enrolled in each program and given our expense trends through Fiscal '24. Ensuring that eligible Marylanders can access healthcare and childcare affordably are deliberate policy priorities of the Governor and the Legislature. This proposal reinforces our prioritization of these efforts in the State's budget plan.

This is an initial step in what is always an ongoing and evolving process to implement and manage the budget. We have multiple recurring and regular milestones ahead that will help us refine the full extent of the General Fund challenge this year, we have Fiscal Year '24 year-end close coming up and in the midst of, we have September then December revenue forecast. We have updated forecasts for Medicare, and Medicaid, and childcare enrollment and expense. And we have the Spending Affordability Committee in November and December. In the meantime, we are using this mechanism available to us to

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navigate responsibly, to be proactive and transparent by making these adjustments early in the year.

Now to the Comptroller's question, these budget actions are very targeted. Responsible governing, as the Governor mentioned, means we lean into certain priorities while making tough choices about other priorities. Our top focus in crafting this package of actions has been on efforts to support economic growth, to ensure we are making Maryland more competitive and more affordable to live and to work. We also focused on protecting our efforts to rebuild the core of State government, which had been significantly depleted when this Administration came into office. We focused third on redeploying underutilized funds and last slowing or delaying areas of new or increased funding. Holding the lines on areas of growth or new funding outside of the very top priorities.

This means slowing hiring in many of the new positions that have just been added to the budget. Where legislative funding mandates increased for Fiscal '25, in many cases we are rolling them back to the prior year level, or where there are new mandates set to come online in Fiscal '25, in many cases we are deferring, partially or entirely, to future years to start those initiatives. Since new funding for new initiatives has not yet been deployed, these actions to slow or defer can have the least impact on services people already rely on. In some areas of significant increased funding in recent years, the package also represents rolling back some of the increase to more sustainable levels.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Okay. Thank you, Secretary Grady. I appreciate it and it's evidence that many challenging conversations were had to arrive at this list. I think anybody who sat at their kitchen table trying to balance their household budget against rising costs or who has stared at spreadsheets on their laptop, I think that's more timely, knows that in tough times everyone has to share in the challenge.

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I do want to sort of connect the dots as well for folks who are watching. Revenues, as the Secretary said and as we have reported out of the Board of Revenue Estimates, 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. And revenues, of course, into the State increase when Maryland businesses are thriving, when more people are working, when they're getting raises because their businesses are doing well, when people buy goods. That all means revenue for the State.

People can't work if they are sick. And parents cannot work -- or guardians or caregivers cannot work, if they 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 short term.

So thank you, Secretary Grady, for your work and thank you, Governor, for your continued partnership. Thank you to all of the advocates and folks who are here today and who have sent letters, emails, made phone calls. Your programs are essential and important, and we look forward to continuing to work with you. Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you so much.

TREASURER DAVIS: Good morning, everyone. Hopefully, you can hear me. The Governor and the Comptroller covered much of what I was going to say. But one of the things, Governor, I wanted to sort of point out, and I hope that everyone that's here today and those that might read or hear about what happens, too often when we hear about deficits and budgets and so forth, people will sort of willy nilly say, "Oh well, cut the budget. Eliminate the waste." They'll throw out these generic things as if this money -- these are real people.

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And you're going to hear from the speakers shortly.

While it may not be important to me or it may not be important to you, every single dollar that this State spends benefits somebody. Somebody thinks that program is important. Somebody thinks that grant is important. It helps somebody. It may not help you. And so we have some of that. The Comptroller and I, we were talking. Some of the people that have called saying oh, save my program and cut someone else's, or cut that person. You know, we sort of have groups pitted against each other now. But when we make these sort of, and I'm not trying to be inflammatory, but when we make these callous statements about just cut, cut, we act as if the Governor and I are out spending money on ourselves or something along those lines.

No, every dollar that this State takes in and sends out, it benefits somebody. I don't want that to be lost on those who would say we need to cut the budget, or this isn't that. And tell us who -- or tell us what and then I can go back and tell, that group, you know, so and so said to cut your program. So and so advocated for the elimination of this program. And see it's easy to say, again, in the abstract to cut, but when you have to look that group, or those children, or whomever in the eye and say that we have to reduce your program, then it doesn't become so easy.

So I just asked and I'll -- because I feel it coming on. So I'll just end it, Governor, by saying I hope as we go through that, we ask -- I ask that you listen critically to the people that are going to follow about how any reductions or whatever is going to negatively impact them. So when we make statements about cutting budgets and like it's so easy that you think about those who are who are speaking, who are about to come for us. Thank you very much.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Thanks.

TREASURER DAVIS: You're welcome.

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GOVERNOR MOORE: With that, we'll move on to the speaker requests that we have for this item. Once again, I would ask that the speakers would limit their comments to three minutes. And Ms. Secretary, again, I would ask if you could help to monitor for that. We'll start with the first two speaker requests that have signed up to appear virtually.

So first, I'd like to ask Ms. Laura Malkus of the Baltimore Small Stage Coalition to join. Ms. Marcus?

MR. GONTRUM: She's on.

GOVERNOR MOORE: She's on. Okay. Great.

Good morning, Laura. Good to see you.

MS. MALKUS: Good morning. Thank you so much for allowing me to speak. I am Laura Malkus. I'm the President of Fells Point Corner Theater, the Treasurer of the Baltimore Small Stage Coalition, a Maryland taxpayer, and a lifelong artist. Governor Moore, in February, you were quoted in The Washington Informer celebrating your historic investment in the Maryland State Arts Council's budget this year. Quote, "This historic investment underscores our belief in the transformative power of the arts to inspire, heal, and bring communities together." And now, just four months later, here we are in the very first salvo.

Arts organizations are in an economic disaster thanks to COVID, changing audiences, the biggest charitable declines in decades, and unprecedented inflation. You know flagship organizations across the country and here are closing or have already closed. And those of us who have survived this far were already bracing for our first post-pandemic year without COVID funding. Honestly, any cuts to the arts right now kicks us all when we are down.

Additionally, arts funding is historically inequitable and inaccessible, but MSAC has made great strides in this area. 291 organizations

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received general organization grants just last year. Back of the envelope, something like a third went to small neighborhood organizations like the ones I represent, and which are statistically more likely to be diverse. Hundreds more creativity grants were given to individual artists and organizations still too small to receive a general grant. Meanwhile, in this budget, a handful of organizations have protected direct allocations on top of their general grants without going through a competitive process.

One organization alone is getting something like \$1.4 million in extra direct protected funding in addition to their a million plus dollar grant from the pot we all share. I don't want anyone to lose their arts funding. But respectfully, this is not a targeted cut. It takes aim at hundreds of organizations that are boots on the ground. Small arts organizations provide direct service in our communities. There are many more of us. We produce more art, and our art is more accessible to everyone.

Last year, my theater provided stipends to more than 50 local artists, produced the work of 15 local playwrights, ran three creative drama classes for neighborhood kids, and partnered with nine other community organizations and our grant is less than \$8,000. And this is the pot that has been targeted to cut. We all know that times are tough ahead. We do need to believe in the transformative power of the arts to heal, inspire, and bring our communities together. And I am asking you to please reconsider cutting support to those of us who do the most of that with the least resources to begin with. I'm deeply grateful for this opportunity to speak. Thank you very much.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you so much, Ms. Malkus.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Thank you.

TREASURER DAVIS: Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: We'll proceed with two in-person speaker

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requests. Starting with the State Public Defender, Natasha Dartigue. Ms. Dartigue, good morning.

MS. DARTIGUE: Good morning. Good morning, Governor, Madam Comptroller, Mr. Treasurer. I am Natasha Dartigue and proudly serve as a Maryland Public Defender, a stone catcher. Today, I speak on behalf of 1,105 OPD employees, all stone catchers. Bryan Stevenson, founder of the Equal Justice Initiative, in his book, *Just Mercy*, eloquently describes stone catchers, "In criminal court, there's a great degree of grief and pain experienced by individuals on both sides. Stone catchers are those who exist amongst the pain, decide that they must be there to catch the stones that people cast." We at OPD stand by the Constitution and protect all and exist to protect those with feeble knees, stained hands, the marginalized, and the poor.

We are stone catchers. It is hard. Being a stone catcher makes people angry. There are some who are angered that I am speaking here today. In Fiscal Year 2023, we handled 187,738 active matters. It is exhausting work. It is sitting with a person at their lowest moments. It is vital work. It is gritty, ugly cry work, especially when you cannot catch enough. Being a stone catcher also means you speak up when others remain silent; more loudly, when others are shouting. For 1,105 reasons, I speak up today.

OPD has been woefully under-resourced for decades. In a sea of public servants throughout the State, I distinguish OPD in three important ways. One, we are constitutionally mandated as the last shield of protection for the very people for whom this Board seeks to fund better healthcare and childcare. Two, OPD serves in all 24 Maryland jurisdictions, but unlike prosecutors, we do not receive funding from the independent jurisdictions. And three, OPD represents approximately 85 percent of all criminal defendants in the state. So if OPD does not function well, this is not only a loss in humanity, but it essentially stops the

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gears of the criminal legal system in Maryland.

On a very short list of select agencies, it is unfathomable how OPD can appear on the list. OPD is in crisis, every dollar matters. The additional funding directly tackles the continued inequities in our core staff salaries. The cuts affect current secretaries, intake workers, office managers, paralegals, and investigators. The General Assembly recognized that the status quo was abhorrent and allocated funds to provide relief allowing OPD to address current staff salaries.

The supplement would provide a relief to 68 percent of OPD core staff. Our core staff, the least paid, are the glue that keeps us together. As the leader of an incredible team of talented, dedicated, and resilient stone catchers, I urge you to vote no. Or in the alternative, I ask that you make a motion to strike the line of the proposal that identifies cuts to OPD. A no to OPD is a direct means of ensuring justice, dignity, and fairness to all in Maryland and ensures that no one is left behind. Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you very much.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: I'd like to recognize Charlotte Davis of the Rural Counsel of Maryland. Ms. Davis, it's good to see you again. Good morning.

MS. DAVIS: Good morning, Mr. Governor, Madam Comptroller, Mr. Treasurer. My name is Charlotte Davis. I'm the Executive Director of the Rural Maryland Counsel. We're an independent State agency located in the Maryland Department of Agriculture. I'm here today representing the RMC Executive Committee. They sent a letter to you Governor yesterday that they wanted me -- they asked me to come here today to talk to you.

I also wanted to recognize some of our board members in the

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audience. I see Scott Warner, he's our past Chair. He's the Executive Director of the Mid-Shore Regional Council. Greg Padgham, he's our Vice Chair. He's also the Executive Director of the Tri-County Council of the Lower Eastern Shore. And Jerry McLaurin, he's a Board Member -- also working with People for Change. So you know, we're here, obviously, in opposition to the proposed cuts. We feel that we're the community that can least afford to absorb this cut. We are the -- we have the highest unemployment rates, the highest poverty rates, and we have the lowest per capita incomes.

We feel this -- the Executive Committee felt that the cut is somewhat disparate. While you call it targeted and strategic, we noticed that 85 percent of the cut to the Maryland Department of Agriculture is taken out of the Rural Maryland Council. The RMC Executive Board, we strongly have supported actively distributed budget cuts in the past, and we continue -- we'll continue to do so. However, we just didn't feel that this one was equitably distributed amongst the programs of the Department.

We also lack capacity. We see a lot of small towns and villages. They can't afford paid staff to support and apply for grants. We see that there's a lack of access just to basic services in rural including broadband, transportation, and healthcare. And we feel that our mission fits what you're trying to do, to support the future growth of rural Maryland and Maryland in general. You know, we're -- a rising tide lifts all boats. You know, another sports analogy is if, you know, you're only as strong as your weakest link.

And I'm here to tell you, rural Maryland, we're the weakest link. We're 25 percent of the overall State's population. We represent 1.7 million Marylanders. And we have felt we've been doing a great job. With our programs, we do the most with the least amount. We commissioned an economic impact study between the years 2018 and '21 and found that we generated over \$134

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million in economic impact with the State's resources that we receive. And that's supported by almost, I think, \$45 million in employee compensation. And then just looking at Fiscal Year 2023, our programs, the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund and the Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund, we supported 600 jobs. We serviced 377,000 Marylanders. And we were able to secure \$34 million in additional matching outside funds that we're bringing into our rural communities that otherwise wouldn't have them. So I'm here just to show -- to put a face. This is what these cuts are going to mean. It's going to cause a lot of pain. And our rural communities, we can least afford to absorb this cut. And we just respectfully ask that you reconsider. Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you for your work.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Lastly, I'd like to recognize Mr. Bruce Bereano speaking on behalf of Queen Anne's County.

Bruce, good morning.

MR. BEREANO: Good morning, Governor. Good morning, Mr. Treasurer. Good morning, Madam Comptroller. Bruce Bereano, I'm here on behalf of Queen Anne's County, a member of the Maryland Rural Coalition. Also represent Caroline County, which is a member of the Council as well. I don't want to repeat what Ms. O'Neill (sic) indicated. Being a lobbyist, I know how to count votes, so I know what's going on.

But it's very important that this be put on the record. And it's also very important, respectfully, that you, Mr. Governor -- I say this with deep respect -- and your Secretary of Budget know on the record as you prepare your next budget for the next session. And hopefully, you'll take some of these points into account and reflection as these cuts are made to make adjustments as you,

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policy-wise, think are important.

We're very disappointed. Particularly disappointed -- I think it's important to understand that for the past three fiscal years, the Maryland Rural Coalition has kept its funding requests at the same level. They've not asked for any more money. So they've been at the same level of funding for the past three years on these various programs. This budget cut is pretty traumatic for the Council, as has been indicated. Without the funding, seniors in the rural Maryland will not be able to find transportation for medical appointments. Students in the rural Maryland will not be able to attend, transfer over to and have transportation and gain critical career and technical education for job skills for readiness.

The impact in rural Maryland is quite considerable. I appreciate and respect, more than you know, the comments of all three of you. And having been around Annapolis for a while, I know the importance, and the responsibility, and the obligation that the Board has and government has. I'm primarily here not to get only on the record, but again to ask -- and I'm sorry, I'm repeating it Governor -- that please you and your Madam Secretary, with deep respect, take into account these cuts that have been made and factor them in where you think there's meritorious ways of modifying and trying to adjust.

The next fiscal year is not that far away. The Legislature is not that far away. So that at least the pain can be minimized and lessened, and further priorities by your Administration can be established for rural Maryland. The Eastern Shore is a critical part of the state of Maryland. I love the Eastern Shore. I love Crisfield the most.

(Laughter.)

MR. BEREANO: Good day. Thank you. I'm happy to answer any questions.

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COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you. I love the Eastern Shore too. And thank you. Thank you.

Is there any further discussion on this item or questions prior to? Very briefly, I'd also like to highlight the Maryland Stadium Authority. Given the number of items that they have on the agenda today. I specifically want to highlight Item 31, which is a contract award for much needed and long overdue capital improvements to one of our state's crown jewels and the economic drivers, which is the Baltimore Convention Center.

Item 33 is a construction contract for the new Frederick Douglass High School, which I'm told is the second-to-last school project appearing before the Board under the 21st Century Schools Program. And once completed, the Douglass building project will represent the 29th school project in Baltimore City undertaken by the Maryland Stadium Authority.

And I also just want briefly shout out Item 35, which is a pre-construction services contract for renovations at Oriole Park at Camden Yards. And I specifically want to draw everyone's attention to the details on that one because the MBE participation goal for that contract is 47.5 percent.

So with that, I want to express a deep gratitude to Chairman Thompson, to Executive Director Frenz, and to the entire team at the Maryland Stadium Authority for the continued excellence that they are exemplifying each and every single day and for being thoughtful and intentional about ensuring robust MBE participation in all of these contracts.

With that, is there any further discussion on any of the items on the Secretary's -- yes?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Governor. And thank you to the Maryland Stadium Authority for being a great partner and

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working so closely with us. I do have just one question on Item 35. It's so exciting to see us meeting and exceeding our MBE goals and to see that high goal. I really appreciate it. And I certainly know that you and the Treasurer and Governor share my excitement. Once these projects are identified and construction commences, they'll certainly enhance the game day experience and help Oriole Park at Camden Yards remain the world class ballpark that it is. Maybe one worthy of hosting an All-Star game sometime soon.

I do have one question for the MSA representative, who I believe is online. I'm going to let the -- or is he here or is someone here? Oh, you're here. Oh, great. Okay. Good to see you.

MR. MCGUIGAN: Good to see you.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Thank you for being here.

MR. MCGUIGAN: Good morning, Governor, Mr. Treasurer, Madam Comptroller. For the record, my name is Gary McGuigan, Maryland Stadium Authority. I will attempt to answer your question, but I do have a backup online.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: So I noticed Gilbane Contracting is currently doing the work at Ravens' stadium, the M&T Bank Stadium. And they're being selected for Oriole Park as well. And so I did take a look at the scoring, and I wanted -- I was hoping that you could explain -- so there's a one-point difference in technical scoring between the first and second overall ranked proposals. And I was hoping you could discuss some of the specific differences between the two proposals that led to the scoring.

MR. MCGUIGAN: Okay. So I was not part of that selection committee.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Okay.

MR. MCGUIGAN: So if I can call on Phil Hutson? Thank you.

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MR. HUTSON: Good morning? Good morning, can you hear me?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Yes, we can.

MR. HUTSON: Okay. Good morning. I'm sorry. I'm joining out of town, so bear with me. If you could repeat the question, the sound broke up just a little bit. I'm sorry about that.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Sure, no problem. I was just noting that they're -- Gilbane is currently doing M&T. They're now going to be doing Oriole Park as well. Just made me want to know a little bit more about -- there was only a one-point difference in technical scoring. And I was hoping you could -- when we reached out to your Agency -- or to the Agency, we did not get much of a response. So I was hoping that you could discuss some of the specific differences between the proposals that led to the selection of Gilbane.

MR. HUTSON: Yes, ma'am. So the process that we went about was a tested procurement process that the Stadium Authority has used a number of times. There was a selection committee comprised of MSA employees and also Orioles representatives. And so they unanimously decided or voted on the apparent awardee. And looking at the proposals, I think technically the selection committee felt as though that the apparent awardee was a little stronger than the others that were submitted.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Okay. I'll follow up. That was, I think, even more vague than the earlier answer that we had received. So I also wanted -- I have been -- I also had a question about sort of oversight of Gilbane and your contractors at the stadiums. I know they do a lot of work with subcontractors. Have been hearing sort of bubbling up stories about withholding not happening. And so I just wondered how -- about the oversight process that you have for your contractors to make sure they're abiding by all wage and hour

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laws?

MR. HUTSON: So the wage and hour laws, I'm not exactly sure of the instance that you're referring to, but certainly, we can look into it and we can reach out on more details. But there's a compliance division with MSA that is overseeing that -- overseeing the wages, both prevailing wages, any complaints, doing some reviews in the field. And then, we also have the MBE compliance. So be happy to touch base with your staff and see what that specific item is and figure that out, but we do have a whole group that oversees that and manages that compliance and checks it.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Great, that sounds good. I look forward to working with your compliance team. Just so happens I have a compliance team too in our Agency. So we can get our compliance teams together.

MR. HUTSON: Okay.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Thanks very much. Thank you.

MR. HUTSON: Thank you.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: That's it for me. Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: All right. Thank you.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thanks, guys.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Good work on the schools.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Any further items of discussion on the Secretary's agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: No.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Okay. May I have a motion to approve the Secretary's agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Motion to approve the Secretary's

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agenda.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Is there a second?

TREASURER DAVIS: Second.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Outstanding. Thank you so much.

Thanks, Mr. Secretary.

We'll proceed with the Department of Natural Resources agenda.  
Secretary Kurtz, good morning.

MR. KURTZ: Good morning, Governor, Madam Comptroller, Mr. Treasurer. For the record, my name is Josh Kurtz. The Secretary of Department of Natural Resources. Department has four items for your review today on the agenda. Myself and staff are available to answer any questions you may have.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Fantastic. Are there any questions, comments for DNR? May I have a motion to approve the DNR agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Motion to approve the DNR agenda.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Is there a second?

TREASURER DAVIS: Second.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you so much. Thanks, Mr. Secretary.

Next up, University System of Maryland. Ms. Johnson, good morning. Good to see you.

MS. JOHNSON: Good morning, Governor, Madam Comptroller, Mr. Treasurer. Joselyn Johnson, representing the University System of Maryland. We have six items on the agenda this morning for your consideration. And we are withdrawing Sub-Items 3 and 4 of the Agenda Item 1-GM And we're happy to answer any questions you may have.

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GOVERNOR MOORE: Wonderful. Is there any discussion on the USM agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: No, no discussion. Exciting to see the Blackwell Hall continue to move forward. That's great. Thanks.

MS. JOHNSON: Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: May I have a motion to approve the USM agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Motion to approve the USM agenda.

GOVERNOR MOORE: And is there a second?

TREASURER DAVIS: Second.

GOVERNOR MOORE: All right. Thank you so much.

You knew where I was going?

MS. RADOMSKY: Um-hum.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Good morning, Ms. Radomsky with the MDOT agenda.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: It's like you've done this before.

(Laughter.)

MS. RADOMSKY: Just this once. Good morning, Governor, Madam Comptroller, Mr. Treasurer -- it's still morning. Valerie Radomsky, Chief Procurement Officer, Department of Transportation. Today, we have 13 items for your consideration. Seeking approval of three contracts to certified small businesses valued at \$5.8 million and one contract to a duly certified small minority business for \$3.5 million. We have representatives available to answer any questions you may have.

GOVERNOR MOORE: That's great. Any discussion on the MDOT agenda?

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COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: I just wanted to give a shout out to MTA on 13-GM. Governor, this is the award for the hybrid electric and battery-electric buses. So this is -- MTA is working and -- has made the decision to add 50 new hybrid-electric and 20 new battery-operated electric buses through an intergovernmental cooperative purchase agreement through the State of Washington. So this is really a direct result of MTA evaluating the state of good repair of its fleet, and taking quick action to ensure that operational safety of the vehicles while reducing future greenhouse gas emissions at the same time.

And they identified this ICPA to use so that they could move forward quickly because it's so challenging right now to buy these buses. And so I just want to say well done to MTA. Look forward to more electric bus buys in the future as we look to reach our State's goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 40 percent by 2030. So thank you.

MS. RADOMSKY: Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Great work. Any further discussion?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Not for me.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Okay. May I have a motion to approve the MDOT agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Motion to approve the MDOT agenda.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Is there a second?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Second.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Outstanding. Thanks, Ms. Radomsky.

We will conclude with the DGS agenda. Secretary Chaudhry, good morning.

MR. CHAUDHRY: Good morning, sir. Good morning, Mr. Governor, Madam Comptroller, Mr. Treasurer. For the record, I am Atif

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Chaudhry, Secretary of the Maryland Department of General Services. Today, the Department is presenting 46 items on our agenda. We will be withdrawing one item, and that is 46-S.

Our agenda does include \$21 million in capital grants and loans. I wanted to highlight two in particular, that is Items 8 and 11-CGL, which combined provide \$12 million in State support to Montgomery County. It goes right in line with, Madam Comptroller, what you're saying about electric buses. Item 11-CGL provides \$5 million in support for replacement of existing buses and the purchase of additional electric battery fuel cell buses for Montgomery County's Ride On fleet.

Additionally, Item 8-CGL provides \$7 million to fund initial steps in supporting studies for bus rapid transit in 10 corridors across Montgomery County, supplementing both the Metro Rail Red Line as well as the MTA Purple Line, which is obviously still under construction. These two grants will support State and local priorities of reducing congestion, increasing transit ridership, as well as increased air quality through reduced air quality emissions.

Keeping an eye on our minority business participation on our contracting, our agenda does include four contract awards and modifications totaling more than \$4.7 million. And we have agency representatives here to answer any questions you may have.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Outstanding. Thanks, Secretary Chaudhry.

We have a speaker request for Item 20-CGL. And so I'd like to welcome Mr. Adam (sic) Levine, who's joining us virtually in support of a \$500,000 capital grant to the Humane Society in Baltimore County. It's is Adam on -- or Andrew on?

MR. LEVINE: Yeah, it's Andrew. I'm here.

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GOVERNOR MOORE: Oh, great. Good morning, Andrew.

MR. LEVINE: You don't see me on the screen?

GOVERNOR MOORE: We hear you, can't see you.

MR. LEVINE: There we go. There we go. All right. There was a little delay.

Nice to meet you. Thank you so much, everyone. We're very grateful for the opportunity. Our humane society, we have been in operation for almost 98 years serving the Baltimore and the Maryland community. And we've helped out around 14 to 15 hundred animals per year. And we're very proud of our organization. This new project is something unique. It's never been done before in the United States.

Our founder, Elsie Barton, she lived on the property and there's a house that's there that part of it was built in the 1860s. And just a little fact about the organization, the shelter and her family farm used to be located where Greenspring Avenue and the Baltimore Beltway is located. When the State wanted to build the beltway, they swapped property for where we're at now. So we're on 365 acres. Our property is an animal wildlife sanctuary, protected. And we are taking Mrs. Barton's house, and we are going to do something very unique.

One of the problems that we run into is a lot of elderly people who go into hospice and lose their pets and they never see their pet again -- and they have nowhere to give up the pet. Sometimes, they'll give it up and they'll never see it again when they're still going through hospice. So we are going to renovate and restore and put an addition on the home she lived on on the property and when people are going to go into hospice, we'll give them an opportunity for us to take care of their pet in a home environment. And while they're in hospice, we will have volunteers bring the pets to see them while they're still in hospice so that they always know their pets taken care of.

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Something that's never been done in the entire country. We were actually working with Texas A&M. They don't have something -- something a little bit like it, but nothing -- for the veterinary school, we spent a few days down there working with them and learning also. And so this is something very unique. Instead of the pet being dropped off and they never see it again, it's a lot of stress for the owner and of course the pet. So it's kind of a transition for both.

And then when the person passes, then we will find the pet a forever home. So but in the meantime, they'll be very well cared for. And that person will always feel comfortable and loved, and they'll still be with their pet. So we'll be bringing the pet to see them while they're going through their tough times. And so that's kind of what we're doing. And like I said, it's never been done before in the country, and we'll be the first, and hopefully we'll create a -- something iconic for other shelters to learn from. And hopefully, they can do it too.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Great.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Nice.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Andrew, thank you so much. Thank you for the work too. And please express our deep gratitude to the team --

MR. LEVINE: Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: -- as well for the work you're all doing every day.

MR. LEVINE: Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: We also have a speaker request for Item 41-CGL. A capital grant for the Diamond Foundation of Prince George's County. And we are pleased to be joined here in person by Mr. Carroll James Harris,

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who's here to speak in support of the item.

Mr. Harris, great to see you. Thanks so much for being here.

MR. HARRIS: Thank you. Good morning, Governor, Madam Comptroller, and Mr. Treasurer. My name is Carroll James Harris. I am the Polemarch of the Hyattsville/Landover, Maryland Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. I'll pause, Governor.

(Laughter.)

TREASURER DAVIS: I was going to say.

(Laughter.)

TREASURER DAVIS: Not just the governor.

(Laughter.)

MR. HARRIS: My chapter, as well. We have been working in conjunction with Senator Ron L. Watson of the 23rd Legislative District, and we make up the leadership of the Diamond Foundation of Prince George's County, Inc. And we've been looking for a home in the Bowie area to basically provide philanthropic community services, as well as scholarships to the youth of Prince George's County.

And so I'm here today in support of this resolution that we will be able to have a permanent home where we can actually continue the work of this great organization. In fact, in Dallas, Texas right now, there are over 5,000 kids in our Guide Right Program for middle school and high school students that are actually taking place in this national program, but we do that here on a local level. So I just wanted to come and ask for your support in this endeavor. Thank you very much.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Well, thank you very much. We're pleased to advance the grant today. You all do remarkable work, even for a Kappa man.

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(Laughter.)

GOVERNOR MOORE: I'm happy to see you.

MR. HARRIS: I'll take that today.

(Laughter.)

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: I'm a neutral observer.

(Laughter.)

GOVERNOR MOORE: Is there any further discussion on the DGS agenda? May I have a motion to approve the DGS agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Motion to approve the DGS agenda.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Is there a second?

TREASURER DAVIS: Second.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Outstanding. Thank you so much. This concludes the meeting for today's Board of Public Works. We will see you all on August 7th. We are officially adjourned. Thank you so much, everybody.

(Whereupon, at 11:24 a.m., the meeting was concluded.)