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BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS

*GOVERNOR'S RECEPTION ROOM, SECOND FLOOR, STATE HOUSE
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND*

January 8, 2025

10:10 a.m.

PRESENT

HONORABLE WES MOORE

Governor

HONORABLE BROOKE E. LIERMAN

Comptroller

HONORABLE DERECK E. DAVIS

Treasurer

JOHN GONTRUM

Secretary, Board of Public Works

ATIF CHAUDHRY

Secretary, Department of General Services

THOMAS HICKEY

Director of Procurement and Real Property Initiatives,
Department of Natural Resources

JOSH KURTZ

Secretary, Department of Natural Resources

VALERIE RADOMSKY

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PROCEEDINGS

GOVERNOR MOORE: Good morning, everybody.

(Chorus of good morning.)

GOVERNOR MOORE: Good morning, good morning. Please take a seat, everybody. Thank you. Thank you. Good morning and happy first day of session.

(Chorus of cheers.)

GOVERNOR MOORE: Great to see you all. And also, for many, since it's our first time gathering since this new year, happy new year to everybody. I hope you had a wonderful and a restful and a relaxing new year. I want to spend especially a few moments just talking a little bit about the start of session and what I think is going to be not just an important, but also a very direction-setting session for the people of this state.

You know, we are very, very clear about what we inherited and what the situation we're walking into is. You know, we're clear about the fact that we have inherited this fiscal crisis and inherited the fact that there has been a long standing multi-billion-dollar structural deficit that even billions of dollars of federal COVID money couldn't mask over the fact that there's a business model problem.

The thing that I want the people of this state to know is that my optimism for where this State is going has not diminished one iota. And the reason is because even though this was a crisis that we inherited when we walked in, I think about what we've been able to do collectively as a state, even just in the first couple of years where despite the fact that we walked in with a fiscal crisis, that this state collectively has been able to work together to address issues of

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public safety.

And now, not only helping to break the back of this scourge and the rise in violent crime that we've seen in Baltimore and across the state of Maryland, that we're now seeing two straight years of some of the steepest drops in violent crime anywhere in the entire country. And not just Baltimore, but the state of Maryland. That when we were first brought on board, that Maryland was 43rd in the country in unemployment and now because of collective work of our state, now Maryland is going on 15 straight months of the almost the lowest unemployment rates in the entire country.

That despite the fact that we walked in with a -- and had one of the largest and most tragic maritime tragedies in our country's history taking place during our time, that the four objectives that we've laid out about making sure that the families were cared for and comforted, making sure that we reopen the federal channel, and making sure -- make sure all the people impacted were supported to include our Port workers and their families. And now, we are going into this year with construction beginning that is going to be 100 percent cost shared by the federal government.

That while this tragedy happened during our time, we will rebuild the Key Bridge on our watch. And so, when people say what still gives you hope and optimism despite the -- despite a fiscal forecast, my answer is that we inherited it and look at what we've gotten done already. And so, in this moment, we are going to be fine because at the end of this session, we will have a balanced budget that truly underlines and underscores hopes and aspirations and dreams of the people of this state and focuses on being able to grow our economy, making Maryland more business friendly, and growing out the working-class Marylanders, middle-class Marylanders.

That we will be able to continue this momentum keeping our

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communities safe. We will be able to have the best public schools in the entire country. That's the aspiration. That's the goal. That's what we're going to accomplish. And so we're incredibly grateful for our partners inside this work to be able to work and make that happen. With that, before I move on, I want to turn it over to the Treasurer also for some words of remembrance.

Mr. Treasurer?

TREASURER DAVIS: Good morning, everybody, and happy new year. I want to just take just a few short moments to recognize a couple people.

First of all, former Senator Rich Colburn passed recently. Those of you who have been around a little while, you know Senator Colburn. I think he was first elected to the House of Delegates in 1983, and I believe his tenure lasted through 2014 or 2010 -- right around that time. Senator Colburn was not a flashy senator or anything like that, but he was a strong advocate for our farmers, for our watermen. He represented District 37, I believe, down on the Eastern Shore. I got to know him sort of by chance just sort of being down here and he was always very nice to me. He was never -- he was never partisan, or at least I never encountered any partisanship. Just a really nice guy, good guy. He will be missed. And certainly, our condolences to his family.

Another colleague that also we recently lost, Murray Levy. He did a single term in the early 2000s from Charles County. I think he's best known or best remembered for his work as a county commissioner and with MACo. That's where he really made his name. He came to Annapolis and quickly became a fiscal expert. But more than that, he -- very funny guy, great sense of humor. Again, just a really nice guy. Like I said, he stayed a single term, but he made a quick impact.

And then finally, while she didn't pass, she's left the General

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Assembly and has been elevated to Baltimore County Executive, Kathy Klausmeier -- Senator Klausmeier. Kathy and I -- and I just thought about this when I wanted to mention her, she and I came in 30 years ago today. We both have been celebrating 30 years of public service. We were assigned both to the House Environmental Matters Committee and stayed eight years there before she was elevated in 2022 election to the State Senate.

I don't have to tell you all about Senator Klausmeier. I'm sure you all know her. Just a wonderful person -- very nice, hard working. She sort of made a name for herself working with the visually impaired. That was one of her soul spots, but just a really nice lady. And I couldn't be happier for her. Well, actually, I have mixed emotions for Kathy. I'm not -- why would we want --

(Laughter.)

TREASURER DAVIS: But I guess she did want it, and I was glad that she got it. I know she will do well during her tenure there and certainly best wishes. So thank you all for just allowing me to have a few moments to remember the two colleagues that have passed, and the one colleague that has moved on. I can't say the greener pastures but have moved on to other pastures. And I'm sure she's going to do just well in Baltimore County and we're going to miss her presence here in Annapolis.

So Governor, thank you very much.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you, Treasurer. Thank you, thank you. And hear, hear on all that. We're very, very excited to work with County Executive Klausmeier and to have her continue her outstanding service to the people of the state. And you're right, to Senator Colburn and also to Delegate Levy and to their families, you have our deepest condolences. Not just from us and from the body, but from the entire State. And may Senator Colburn and Delegate Levy rest in peace.

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With that, we'll go ahead and begin with the business of the day.

Mr. Secretary, good to see you. Good morning.

MR. GONTRUM: Good to see you, Governor. Good morning and happy new year. And good morning and happy new year to you, Madam Comptroller and Mr. Treasurer.

There are 19 items on the Secretary's Agenda this morning and one report of emergency procurement. However, the request of the Department of Human Services, I'm withdrawing Items 17 and 18. At the request of the Stadium Authority, withdrawing Item 15. Leaving 16 items and the one emergency report -- emergency procurement report on the Agenda this morning. I'm happy to assist with answering any questions.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Great, thank you so much. I'd like to start by calling up two items.

The first is Item 11, which is a request from the Department of Planning and Maryland Historical Trust to approve a \$5 million grant. And that's through the African American Heritage Preservation Program. The African American Heritage Preservation Program focuses on identifying projects that work to preserve buildings and sites and monuments or communities that share the unique history of black Marylanders.

And this year, the program will award funding to 31 projects and organizations across 18 different jurisdictions. And through that and through this program, we're supporting historic sites like the Frederick Douglass Summer House, which will receive \$106,000 through this program. This was the home that was built in 1894 for Frederick Douglass, and overlooks his birthplace over on the Eastern Shore.

Now, one of the things I find amazing about this project is Frederick Douglass never lived to actually see the completion of this. This

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summer house still remains one of the oldest standing dwellings that's over in Highland Beach, which was founded in 1893 as Maryland's first African-American municipality. But among its founders of this area in Highland Beach was none other than Major Charles Douglass, who happened to be Frederick Douglass' son. So his son was actually one of the founders of this area in Highland Beach.

And today, that house is used as the Frederick Douglass Museum and Cultural Center to help tell the story of Highland Beach and help tell the story of the people who were both the motivations behind it and also the people who helped to found it. And I got a chance to see it firsthand because I was there for the 130th anniversary of Highland Beach. And I got a chance to tour the museum, which is really spectacular. And I encourage all Marylanders to really go and appreciate the amazing history that is within our beautiful State.

And I was there with Mayor Giselle (phonetic) and former Frederick Douglass Museum culture director, Jean Langston, and all of the Highland Beach residents on that beautiful day. And I'm grateful for Secretary Flora and also Ms. Stacey Montgomery for -- who are both with us, with us here today right here. And thank you so much for all the leadership. I'm also really grateful to MHT's Director, Elizabeth Hughes, for their thoughtful consideration of these recipients and for their dedication to memorializing these really important pieces of history. Things that make our State so special that oftentimes are also forgotten. So to all of you, I want to say thank you. Thank you for your leadership in the work.

I'd also like to call Item 13, which is a request from the Maryland Stadium Authority. And that is to approve \$135 million bonds to finance capital projects over in Birdland, Camden Yards. These stadium improvements include construction of a new center field scoreboard, a revamped sound system. And for

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those who attend a lot of Orioles games, as I do, we cannot wait for the revamped sound system --

(Laughter.)

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Yes, yes. Agreed.

GOVERNOR MOORE: -- and audio control room upgrades over at Oriole Park. The funding will be used to replace a chiller plant that also serves both Oriole Park and M&T Bank Stadium for the design and reconstruction services to support these stadium renovations. This is a meaningful one.

The reason I really wanted to call it up, Mr. Secretary, is just over a year ago, the Board convened a special meeting to approve the lease extension that kept the Orioles at Camden Yards for the next 30 years. That extension allowed the Stadium Authority to issue bonds to support capital improvements over at Oriole Park. And this item is the first bond package for this purpose. And it marks an incredibly important moment for the State's continued partnership with our beloved Baltimore Orioles.

During that meeting, our Administration made it clear that we would invest in assets like Camden Yards not just responsibly, but also in a way that benefits the people of Baltimore and the people of the State of Maryland. And the financing plan that's brought before the Board today is just yet another renewal of our commitment to support this Baltimore renaissance that is very much in place right now.

These investments will ensure that Oriole Park continues to be the best ballpark in Major League Baseball, as written by the sports writers last year we're the best ballpark to watch a baseball game, and will help to draw visitors not just from across the state of Maryland, but also but also across the country. And with that, I'm pleased to turn it over to MSA's excellent Executive Director, Mike Frenz, to share some remarks on the package.

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Executive Director, it is great to see you and happy new year.

MR. FRENZ: Happy new year. Thank you, Governor Moore, for those kind words. I'd like to say good morning to Madam Comptroller Lierman and Mr. Treasurer. I can't really say it better than the Governor has said it. But yesterday, the MSA Board approved this financing transaction, and we hope that today this body will approve it. And as you said, it will allow MSA and the Orioles to continue to provide the kind of excellent stadium experience that people have come to expect.

The chiller plant will allow MSA and the Orioles to proceed to allow the teams to achieve the full schedule that they want to achieve. And as you said, these projects are among the first steps in using the monies allocated by the Legislature to modernize the stadiums and allow the teams to best compete both on and off the field and provide the greatest economic impact and job opportunities for Marylanders.

We're confident the projects at Oriole Park will elicit the same enthusiasm as the projects at M&T Bank Stadium. With respect to this specific transaction, I want to offer kudos to our teams at MSA and the Orioles for their cooperation in planning these projects, and to our finance team, our legal teams from the Attorney General's Office and McKennon Shelton & Henn, and our public finance consultant, Public Resources Advisory Group, for their expertise in putting forward this financing transaction.

This private placement with Rothesay Life as purchaser and RBC Capital Markets as placement agent was chosen because it offered several advantages over conventional debt financing. A competitive long-term fixed rate with call flexibility allowing for future restructuring, if necessary, based on the options in the existing lease; ease of execution with no need for credit ratings or disclosure document; and finally, expedited financing timeline allowing for

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project contract award in early January 2025 because these are long-lead time items. And if you have any additional questions that are beyond my technical capability, I've asked Dawn Abshire, MSA's Chief Financial Officer to join us and Phil Hutson, who is the Director of Capital Planning at the capital -- at the Camden Yards Sports Complex. Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you.

TREASURER DAVIS: I don't have any questions.

MR. FRENZ: Okay, good.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you.

MR. FRENZ: Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Yeah, thank you, Director. And please extend our thanks to Chair Thompson as well and your entire staff.

And also, congratulations to David Rubenstein on the Presidential Medal of Freedom as well. Which is a big deal, watching Baltimorean being honored in that way. And also actually, finally, I just actually heard coming in here the news about Brian Matusz.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Yeah, that's sad.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Who -- is it's a very, very sad. So please, please extend on behalf of us to the entire Matusz family as well --

MR. FRENZ: Thank you. Will do.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you, thank you. Is there any further discussion on any remainder of the Secretary's Agency?

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

Agenda.

GOVERNOR MOORE: And is there a second?

TREASURER DAVIS: Second.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Outstanding. We'll proceed with the

DNR Agenda.

Secretary Kurtz, good morning.

MR. KURTZ: Good morning, sir. Good morning, Madam
Comptroller and Mr. Treasurer. For the record, Josh Kurtz, Secretary of the
Department of Natural Resources. The Department has two items on our agenda
for your consideration today, both of which are Rural Legacy easements. I'm here
to answer any questions, if you have any.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Great. Great.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Happy new year.

MR. KURTZ: Happy new year to you too.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you. Motion to approve the DNR

Agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: So moved.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Is there a second?

TREASURER DAVIS: Second.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Outstanding. Thanks, Mr. Secretary.
Next up is the University System of Maryland, Mr. Hickey. Good
morning.

MR. HICKEY: Good morning, Governor, Mr. Treasurer, and
Madam Comptroller. Tom Hickey representing University System of Maryland.
There are six items for your consideration, and I'm happy to answer any questions
you may have.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you so much. Is there any

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discussion in the USM Agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: No, no questions. Thank you, Mr. Hickey. Happy new year.

MR. HICKEY: Happy new year.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Is there 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: Outstanding.

MR. HICKEY: Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thanks so much, Mr. Hickey. We'll proceed with the MDOT Agenda. Mr. Radomsky, good morning.

MS. RADOMSKY: Good morning, Governor, Madam Comptroller, and Mr. Treasurer. For the record, my name is Valerie Radomsky, Chief Procurement Officer at the Maryland Department of Transportation. Today, we are presenting 11 agenda items for your consideration. We have representatives available to answer any questions you may have.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Great. Thank you so much. I would actually like to call up Item 1-AE, which is a request from the Maryland Transportation Authority to award a \$75 million contract to Bridging Maryland Partnership for general engineering, consulting, and support services to rebuild the Francis Scott Key Bridge.

I wanted to highlight this for a few reasons. One is that the Bridging Maryland Partnership is responsible for ensuring that this bridge is built

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safely, that it's built sustainably, and smoothly. And importantly, as swiftly as possible. And the other point I want to highlight is this has a very ambitious 31.5 percent DBE goal. This contract will ensure that the Key Bridge is rebuilt not just swiftly, smoothly, and sustainably, but also equitably and not just because this is about engineering a bridge. We really are creating pathways to economic success, while uplifting small and minority businesses in the process as well.

And I know that there was a lot that got to this moment. And I want to say thank you to you and this entire team because we saw that March 26th was one of the darkest days in Maryland's history. And we did and continue to mourn the loss of those six Marylanders, who we lost in that tragedy. And we saw how that port was just immediately shut down, but we really moved together.

We moved in partnership. And the leadership that you all continue to show in moving with speed was incredibly important. And I think about -- that partnership also includes the members of the Biden/Harris Administration and the Army Corps of Engineers because despite saying that it would take 11 months to clean up the channel, we were able to collectively get it done in 11 weeks -- and that was a big deal. The other big deal is seeing how our Congressional delegation and all, every member, just did remarkable work in helping to ensure that we could get bipartisan support on getting the Key Bridge 100 percent financed.

And through it all, MDTA worked around the clock to make sure that we had key environmental approvals. And that the Key Bridge rebuild project would not disrupt the community, would not disrupt natural resources, and would not displace any Maryland residents or any Maryland businesses. And the fact that you moved so expeditiously, it didn't just -- it wasn't just important, but it gave us a huge sense of confidence in establishing our commitment that we are going to get this done on time and we are going to get this done on the budget b

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because you cannot have a fully functioning Port of Baltimore, if you do not have the bridge -- full stop.

And so this contract moves Maryland one step closer to restoring a bridge that is used by over 30,000 commuters daily and is central to Baltimore's cultural identity, as well. And so I want to turn it over to MDTA Executive Director, Bruce Gartner. And as I turn it over to Executive Director Gartner, I just want to say, on behalf of the entire state, just how grateful we are for you and your leadership and just the tireless work you've done to help us to recover from this tragedy. So it's great to see you.

MR. GARTNER: Thank you. Thank you, Governor, Treasurer, Madam Comptroller. I'd also like to acknowledge the full federal funding and the support that you have given and so many others in the room with the Congressional delegation and the Biden Administration. It was quite the Christmas present for all of us at the MDTA to have that in the budget, that authorization.

So Governor, you've presented the item very well. I just want to highlight a few things in addition to the 31.5 DBE. But in terms of record speed, I really have to commend my team and Procurement and Engineering, as well as our partners throughout State government. And basically, having a July release of an RFP and here with an award for an A&E contract to you today. Bridging Maryland Partners is a joint venture of WSP, RK&K, JMT. Very strong firms that can help us do very significant work.

This is a long bridge structure. This is not something that MDTA staff do every day despite having just completed the Nice-Middleton Bridge. We need these resources to be able to move expeditiously and in all the goals that you have set forth for us. So that partnership will be our representative, ensuring that the design and construction remains on track. They'll provide a wide range of

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services that are in the agenda item that you have before you today. They help us manage the progressive design builder, Kiewit, by auditing their processes, reviewing submittals, and confirming design criteria is met. The Key Bridge project, as it moves forward, the design builder is advancing efforts. And the team has been hard at work evaluating both design alternatives and construction methods that involves some sophisticated modeling to do that.

This included also work for additional public hearings. So we, as the Agency, made speculation and guesses about the permits that would be needed once Kiewit was in, we went back out to the public in a couple hearings. And we're supported by Kiewit to develop the actual construction techniques that will (indiscernible) bridge and get those permits in place. So the progressive design builder, they have been doing a lot of outreach.

Just to talk about a few other things involved with the Key Bridge effort, engagement within industry to ensure we have a sufficient and diverse pool of qualified firms. And our next in-person outreach event and engagement event will be focused on the DBE construction community and we just posted this in the last couple of days, so this is on February 3rd in Eastern Baltimore County the morning of that day. So we've been supported by the Black Caucus in getting this event organized and really want to get out there, and to provide more details of what is needed from the construction community moving forward.

To support the design and engineering of the bridge, pre-construction activities will be taking place beginning in January, both on land and on the water over the next few months, as you indicated. On the water, just a few examples of what you'll see. You'll see some boats, small barges, and small cranes engaged in various activities such as drilling, collecting soil samples, mapping subsurface waterways.

We know that surface was mapped many times. We saw that in

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the -- but we have to go into even further detail for the build, for the build effort. So workers will be active on both land and in the water as they carry out these tasks. Noise impacts and traffic disruptions will be minimal at this point. These activities are not expected to significantly affect navigation on the Patapsco River.

Next month, MDTA plans to bring three more contracts to the Board of Public Works. These are our construction, management, and inspection contracts that are needed to provide additional oversight of that on-the-bridge activity, the hands-on activity needed for managing the project when it reaches the construction phase. Probably one of the more anticipated milestones will be the demolition of the existing piers, which is planned for this spring. And we continue to advance the designs, those preliminary designs, and we hope to bring those forth to you and the public at large, and engage with them on some of those design elements in the very near future.

So please, for the public, follow us at keybridgerebuild.com and we're also going to be on Facebook with progress reports. So thank you, that completes my remarks.

GOVERNOR MOORE: I love it. Great update and great transparency. This is fantastic. Thank you. Thanks (indiscernible). And also, please extend our thanks to the entire team and also to Secretary Wiedefeld, as well.

MR. GARTNER: Thank you, they're -- it's because of them, not me. So I appreciate it.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: I also just want to say thanks for the transparency. I think we all know that some bridges and roads are not required to come to BPW but of course, services contracts are. And it's great to see you proactively bringing things rather than us having to ask. So just really appreciate you bringing all the services contracts that are supposed to come,

actually bringing them to the BPW. So thank you very much.

MR. GARTNER: Sure, thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thanks. Thank you.

Madam Comptroller?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: That's it. Thanks. This is really impressive. It's exciting to get going, so thank you.

MR. GARTNER: Thank you.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: And one more comment about a different matter.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Please, absolutely.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Okay. I just wanted to make a note about Item 3-GM, which is the MTA's contract for -- it's a request from MTA to award two companies a contract for the purchase and delivery of more than 300 heavy duty busses for the locally operated transit systems, otherwise known as the LOTS.

I think the LOTS are a very important part of our transportation infrastructure in the state of Maryland. Sometimes we need to remind some officials around the state that MTA truly is a statewide transit system and a service in part because it funds the locally operated transit system. So whether you're on the Eastern Shore, western Maryland, southern Maryland -- places that might not traditionally -- we traditionally think of having transit, people rely on these busses to get to grocery stores, to get to their kids, to go to doctor's appointments, and whatnot. So they're a really important part of our transportation infrastructure.

And this contract, I want to just note, actually allows for hybrid, clean diesel, and other purchases which will continue to decrease emissions as they replace older vehicles. So it's nice to see our LOTS busses moving towards

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to be greener as well. So thanks to MTA for bringing this and look forward to the continued transit system around the State.

GOVERNOR MOORE: That's great.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Thanks.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Is there any further discussion on the on the MDOT Agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: No.

GOVERNOR MOORE: May I have a motion to approve the MDOT Agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: A motion to approve the MDOT Agenda.

GOVERNOR MOORE: And is there a second?

TREASURER DAVIS: Second.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Outstanding. Thank you.

MS. RADOMSKY: Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you. And we'll conclude with the DGS Agenda. Secretary Chaudhry, good morning.

MR. CHAUDHRY: Morning, sir. Mr. Governor, Madam Comptroller, Mr. Treasurer, for the record, I am Atif Chaudhry, Secretary of the Maryland Department of General Services. Today, the agency is presenting 34 items on our agenda, including one report of an expedited procurement.

Our agenda does feature ten capital grants and loans, totaling more than \$25 million. I did want to highlight one in particular, and that's Item 4-CGL, which provides \$250,000 in State support to Anne Arundel County Government for the design and construction of four new pickleball courts --

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Yes.

MR. CHAUDHRY: -- at Lake Waterford Park. Project will

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include the new courts, fencing, and retaining walls as well for the community. As we continue to keep an eye on minority business participation in contracting, our agenda does feature four contract awards and modifications to certified minority businesses totaling more than \$39 million. And we have agency representatives here to answer any questions you may have.

GOVERNOR MOORE: I was excited to see the 4-CGL, the pickleball court, so I can finally figure out what this obsession is all about.

(Laughter.)

TREASURER DAVIS: Yeah, I know what --

(Laughter.)

TREASURER DAVIS: And how is it different than a tennis court?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: It's smaller. It's fun. The Senate president will take you out.

(Laughter.)

TREASURER DAVIS: Yeah, we know when to expand the (indiscernible) I'm familiar with.

(Laughter.)

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: I would also like to briefly highlight Item 6-CGL, which is a \$5 million grant to the Pikesville Armory Foundation to support the redevelopment of the Pikesville Armory. And back in 2021, a group of organizations formed this entity, known as the Pikesville Armory Foundation, with a vision of turning a 14-acre military campus into a multi-use venue that all Marylanders could enjoy all season from a multiple of different perspectives.

And once finished, this historic development will be athletic fields, and cultural events, and walking paths, and public arts, and a playground to be

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able to support Marylanders who are in the area and people who want to travel to the area. And last January, the Comptroller and I actually had a --

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: The coldest groundbreaking --

GOVERNOR MOORE: It was so cold.

(Laughter.)

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: It was amazing.

GOVERNOR MOORE: It was supposedly indoor, but it was not indoor. It was freezing, but it was beautiful.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: It was.

GOVERNOR MOORE: To attend the groundbreaking of the project, where we joined with local and State and even federal officials to kick off what is not just exciting -- but also important highlight, this is a veteran-led, community-driven development. A veteran-led, community-driven development. And last April, this body approved \$7 million in capital grant funding to support the armory redevelopment in addition to other awards for the foundation.

And that includes things like the Maryland State Arts Council, the Maryland Historical Trust, and the Baltimore Regional Neighborhood Initiative. And we are pleased to continue today to uplift this once-in-a-generation opportunity to really revitalize and rethink this area within northwest Baltimore. And so partnership produces progress definitely means the kind of work of the Pikesville Armory Foundation.

With that Madam Comptroller --

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Just a really exciting project, and so I'm grateful to be here and to be able to support it. And I just wanted to highlight just down the road from the Armory, there's Item 8-CGL. It is money to continue the acquisition, planning, design, construction, and repair of the campus in Park Heights, the Park Heights campus, for The Associated. And I see Howard

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Libit is here from the BJC. And this is just a really exciting development in Park Heights as well. So we've got this great nexus between what's happening at the Armory, what's happening at Park Heights, and really building a strong continuum along that corridor is essential for community development and increased prosperity along that full corridor. So exciting.

GOVERNOR MOORE: It is. Amen, amen, amen. Is there any further discussion on the DGS Agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: I have one more -- oh.

TREASURER DAVIS: One -- oh, go ahead.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: No, no.

TREASURER DAVIS: No.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Are you sure?

TREASURER DAVIS: I'm sure.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Okay. I just wanted to highlight one other item, which is towards the end, and which might not have been noticed, but we noticed it. It's a request by the Department of Education, MSDE, to extend a task order contract with Deloitte to administer the childcare scholarship program. I have no concerns with this item, but it gave me a hook to take a brief moment to commend Governor Moore and the Administration for their ongoing investments in childcare -- on childcare in Maryland.

So childcare is not just a parenting issue. It is an economic issue. Access to affordable, accessible, quality childcare enables parents who want to work outside the home to stay in the workforce, and it provides jobs for many professionals working with our children. Unfortunately, it's also a large and necessary expense for many Marylanders.

In our State of the Economy Report, which we published this time last year, we talked about the correlation between Maryland's post-pandemic

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depressed labor force participation rates and access to childcare in Maryland. And over the last several months, my team at the Comptroller's Office sought to better understand Maryland's childcare industry and how ongoing investments in childcare can boost the State's labor force participation, especially for mothers with young children. And that, of course, impacts our overall economic growth and success.

The culmination of that work was presented in our Childcare and the Economy Report, the latest follow up brief in our State of the Economy series. And we released that just a couple of weeks ago, and it provides a more in-depth analysis of the factors fueling childcare challenges in Maryland. One key finding identified is that relative to other states, childcare is very expensive. It's more expensive in Maryland, with tuition for center-based infant care accounting for 13 percent of the median income for a married couple and 41 percent of the median income for a single-parent family.

Fortunately, the expanded childcare scholarship program is a key component to addressing that affordability and that program is what this item is all about. So I'm happy to make this data and analysis available to further the discussion on how to boost the State's labor force participation and develop solutions that will increase support for Maryland families going forward. I want to thank my team: Ben Seigel, Danny DiPietro, among others, the Maryland Department of Labor, and the Maryland Family Network for working with us to produce this report and look forward to continuing our analysis on these issues in the future. Thanks so much.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you. It's hugely important. Thank you.

TREASURER DAVIS: Actually, I just wanted to congratulate you on an item that's not on the agenda. And that's this being opening day -- I guess

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they had the grand opening already, but the opening of the Department of Legislative Services Building.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Yeah.

TREASURER DAVIS: That obviously is an integral part of what we do down here and what they do. That was a sorely needed renovation or reconstruction, I guess, as it stands. And I'm sure a lot of wonderful activities are going to go over there. The Governor and I are looking forward to going to the Brooke Lierman wing --

(Laughter.)

TREASURER DAVIS: -- and checking that out. That was a great job. It's just a fantastic building. The employees certainly deserve it. The public deserved it. And just a lot of great work that's going to come out of that, so thank you.

MR. CHAUDHRY: Yeah, thank you, sir. And it's actually built by the Stadium Authority. DGS will be managing and taking over ownership of the building. And the ribbon cutting is tomorrow morning --

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Yeah.

MR. CHAUDHRY: -- for the building.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Yay, it's so exciting. Thank you Maryland Stadium Authority and DGS.

MR. CHAUDHRY: Yep.

GOVERNOR MOORE: (Indiscernible).

MR. CHAUDHRY: Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Any other discussion items on the DGS Agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: No.

GOVERNOR MOORE: And 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: All right.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Can I?

GOVERNOR MOORE: Please.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Just before we end, I just wanted to give a quick shout out and a thank you to Alex Butler, who's been a member of my team since I started and was here before us. He will be moving on to the Maryland Department of the Environment soon, so this is his last BPW meeting. And Jasmine and Tom don't get any ideas, you're stuck with me. But thank you, Alex, for all of your work. Thanks.

(Chorus of Applause.)

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you, I'm glad you're staying in the family.

MR. BUTLER: Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: This concludes today's Board of Public Works meeting. The next meeting will be Wednesday, January 29th. Again, happy, happy opening day to everybody.

(Whereupon, at 10:47 a.m., the meeting was concluded.)