



Delegate
Geraldine
VALENTINO-SMITH

Responsible Leadership



Dear Friends,

The new legislative session convened this past Wednesday, January 9th, 2019. Under the Maryland Constitution, we convene for 90 days annually. I am honored to represent you again and eager to see what the new year holds.

Some of the expected hot topics for the year will be discussions on education funding formulas under the new Kirwan Report on Education, proposals to further increase the statewide minimum wage, possible legalization of marijuana, environmental standards surrounding sustainable energy and measures to assure access to affordable quality health care. I encourage you to visit the Maryland General Assembly webpage to explore all that will be happening this session. [Click here](#) for the MGA website.

Please share your thoughts with me issues that will face us in the next 90 days. I do my best work when I hear from you, my constituents on what matters. In the coming weeks, I will provide my finalized legislative initiatives for your review. I was appointed to the House Appropriations Committee because I have the skill and experience to get results on the important issues as the budget is moving through the Committee and I will keep you posted.

In addition, please review the below information, which I thought you might find helpful. Most important, please share the information about resources for federal workers during the shutdown with any relatives or neighbors you believe may be impacted. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have additional questions or comments to share. You can always reach me by email at Geraldine.Valentino@house.state.md.us or by calling 301-858-3101.

Sincerely,

Geraldine

Geraldine Valentino-Smith
Delegate, District 23A
www.delegategeraldine.com
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General Announcements

Prince George's County has compiled Links for assistance and resources for Federal Workers During Shutdown. [Please see this page for the links.](#)

MONETARY ASSISTANCE DURING THE FEDERAL SHUTDOWN

The president of the Maryland/DC Credit Union Association sent an email offering some information to federal workers who may be feeling the pinch of the federal government shutdown. His message follows:

"We would like to share information with you that may be helpful to your constituents as the federal government shutdown heads toward its third week. Many federal workers and contractors have been impacted by the shutdown and may need assistance.

From the beginning, credit unions have been working with members to offer financial options that include but are not limited to, emergency low-interest or no-interest loans, free skip-a-pay, low-interest lines of credit, waiver of withdrawal penalties for certificates of deposit, financial coaching and payment deferment for existing loans.

Please let your constituents know that if they need assistance, they should not hesitate to contact their credit union to find out what help is available and what special programs will best serve their specific situation. You can be confident that credit unions will do what they can to help their members.

If we can be of any assistance, please feel free to contact me at **443.325.0774** or email me at jbratsakis@mddccua.org.

WSSC Assists Federal Workers Impacted by Ongoing Government Shutdown

WSSC has announced that they will suspend all cutoff service during the federal shutdown. In addition, there are programs which offer monetary assistance which may prove helpful at this time. Please see [this link](#) for information on The Water Fund and the CAP programs. You can find the [WSSC press release here](#).

COAT DRIVE

Youth Leadership Bowie is conducting a coat drive through the January 20. To help those less fortunate, please drop your gently used coats off at 2614 Kenhill Drive. For further information on the coast drive, please email info@Bowiechamber.org.

New Phone Hotline to Report Child Sex Abuse

Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh announced today that his office has established a new telephone hotline for individuals to report child sex abuse.

Office of the Attorney General Child Sex Abuse Hotline: 410-576-6312.

Read more in the Attorney General's [press release](#).

Program offers on-demand taxi service as alternative to MetroAccess

Metro is expanding their Abilities-Ride program which will provide some taxi service rides for as little as \$5.00. Details are below as well as a link to expanded information.

Following a successful pilot in Maryland, Metro announced today that it is requesting proposals from taxi service and other transportation and technology companies to expand the Abilities-Ride program to the District and Virginia and to add additional service providers. The program offers an alternative to MetroAccess service by allowing eligible customers to use on-demand services -- without sharing a ride -- at a discounted rate. The Abilities-Ride program - offered for trips that begin or end in Maryland since a pilot program was launched last September - provides a more flexible alternative to MetroAccess by allowing eligible customers to use on-demand taxi services at a discounted rate, without having to share a ride. With Abilities-Ride, customers pay as little as \$5.00 per trip. An estimated fare is provided to the customer

before taking a trip. Customers pay the first \$5 and Metro pays the next \$15 in fare. Any remaining fare over \$20 is charged to the customer. The Abilities-Ride program is optional for MetroAccess customers, and Metro will continue to offer door-to-door shared-ride service on MetroAccess throughout the District, Maryland and Virginia. More information for MetroAccess customers interested in the Abilities-Ride program is available [here](#).

By Authority of Friends For Geraldine Valentino-Smith, Elizabeth Ryan, Treasurer

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