



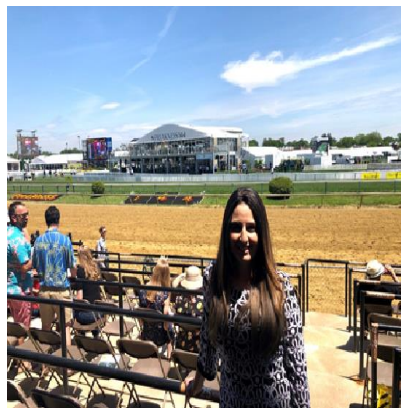
D E M O C R A T
DALYA
A T T A R
DELEGATE, DISTRICT 41

PROGRESS AT PIMLICO, SPORTS WAGERING, UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS & LEGISLATION UPDATES

Dear Friend,

We are now halfway through this unique Legislative Session, and we are continuing to make headway for all Marylanders. I want to take some time to give you a brief update on the progress at Pimlico, sports wagering in Maryland, unemployment and legislation.

Progress at Pimlico



As I've said before, Pimlico is more than just horse-racing. It is a place that offers significant potential for our community. Since my first session in Annapolis, I have made the redevelopment of the Pimlico Race Course one of my top priorities. Our neighborhood deserves to live up to its potential. This redevelopment will not only ensure a safer neighborhood by not leaving this large area vacant, it will provide our community with significant revenue and be a place where our district's families can take their children with this multi-use development.

I am extremely pleased to inform you that the Maryland Stadium Authority selected Ayers Saint Gross of Baltimore as the architects and engineers to design the redevelopment at Pimlico. This announcement is a great beginning to the great future of the Pimlico Race Course.

Sports Wagering



On a related note to horse-racing, Maryland is moving forward with sports wagering. Maryland voters authorized sports wagering in Maryland in November on Election Day, and my committee recently had a hearing on House Bill 940 - Gaming - Regulation of Fantasy Gaming Competitions and Implementation of Sports Wagering.

This bill authorizes sports wagering license holders to accept wagers on sports events. The racing and gaming subcommittee, which I serve on, will be spending a significant amount of time in the coming weeks working on this bill to ensure sports wagering is implemented in Maryland in the greatest and most equitable form.

Direct Deposit for Unemployment



As a direct result of legislation introduced in the General Assembly this session to repair the unemployment insurance system, the Maryland Department of Labor announced direct deposit payments will be available for unemployment insurance claimants in April 2021. This will ensure faster, safer and more convenient payments are made to unemployment insurance claimants. Claimants will receive additional information about this from the Department of Labor next month.

I look forward to continuing to ensure the Department of Labor repairs the unemployment insurance system and ensures claimants receive the money they are owed and in a timely fashion.

Tax Exemption for Activities that Promote Health and Physical Well-Being



Currently, counties and municipalities may tax up to 10% gross receipts derived from what are considered amusement-related activities. There are specific exemptions already in the law, including bingo and bowling.

I believe that our tax policy should promote our policy goals. As a society, we should be promoting health and physical well-being, especially during a pandemic that has affected many people's health.

Ensuring people are staying physically healthy has not only long-lasting positive physical affects, but it has been scientifically proven that physical activities significantly improve our mental health. We are seeing daily challenges with mental health issues increasing, and it is extremely concerning. There are many ways to go about dealing with this type of illness, and one is to promote activities that encourage healthy habits and physical wellness.

I therefore sponsored House Bill 1079, which prohibits counties and municipalities from imposing an admissions and amusement tax on the gross receipts derived from any charge for participating in an activity that promotes health and physical well-being.

As the Maryland State Advisory Council on Health and Wellness stated in their written testimony in support of my bill, "Lack of money can be a constraint or barrier to participation in sports and physical activity for adults and children. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and its devastating economic effects have many families struggling to simply pay their bills, let alone afford the extra fees associated with keeping their loved ones healthy through physical activity."

I look forward to this bill passing and there being an increase in participation in healthy activities.

Gun Straw Purchases - Penalty



We have an enormous amount of illegal handguns on our streets. Just this weekend, a 10 year old child, along with several other people, was shot in Baltimore City.

A gun straw purchase is when a person legally purchases a gun and then sells it to an individual who is either a minor or is prohibited from possessing a handgun due to prior criminal convictions. Straw purchases are causing many illegal guns to flood our streets.

I therefore sponsored House Bill 669 - Firearms Straw Purchases Penalty – and had a hearing in Judiciary this week on this bill. This bill changes the classification of the crime from a misdemeanor to a felony – no longer treating straw purchases in the same category as crimes like trespassing. The maximum penalty remains 10 years' incarceration.

This alteration will deter individuals who are law-abiding citizens on paper and keep purchasing handguns as law-abiding citizens, when really they are the ones causing a lot of violence in our streets. Additionally, this alteration will allow law enforcement agencies to be able to indict these cases and use more resources on charging and prosecuting these cases.

Fairness in Taxing Leased Vehicles



The current law in Maryland for leasing a vehicle is you pay a 6% tax on the total purchase price of the vehicle. In other states, like New York for example, you pay taxes on the price that you are actually paying to lease the vehicle.

Say I go to the store to buy a pair of shoes that cost \$80. The shoes are now on sale for \$54. I purchase the shoes and pay \$54 for the shoes plus 6% tax on the \$54. I am obviously not charged 6% of \$80. So why are we in Maryland being charged 6% on the price of the vehicle, which is not the amount we are paying to lease the vehicle?

I therefore sponsored House Bill 1246 – Alteration to the Leased Vehicles Excise Tax. This bill alters the vehicle excise tax imposed on a leased vehicle by specifying

the tax imposed is equal to the 6% of the capitalized cost reduction and each monthly payment.

This bill is about fairness, affordability, safety and the environment. When a person leases a vehicle, it is a brand new vehicle, and they make monthly payments. This gives many people who may not be able to afford to purchase a brand new car, the ability to drive a safe car.

I had a hearing on this bill in the Ways & Means committee this week and look forward to working with my committee on moving this bill.

As always, please continue to keep in touch with me. My email is dalya.attar@house.state.md.us. Thank you for entrusting me to represent you and I look forward to continuing to work hard for all Marylanders.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dalya". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Delegate Dalya Attar