OFFICE OF THE
SENATE PRESIDENT

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Maryland Senate President Bill Ferguson Announces
New Senate Leadership Appointments for 2027

ANNAPOLIS, Md. – Maryland Senate President Bill Ferguson (D-Baltimore City) announced today a slate of new leadership appointments in the Senate of Maryland.

The Senate is poised to lead Maryland over the next four years as the state tackles a $2.5 billion budget shortfall, redesigns healthcare delivery, lowers costs for Marylanders, and leverages technology to increase economic diversity and improve government service delivery and accountability.

Understanding the need for overarching leadership and strategy, the Senate is redesigning key leadership roles to best position its talents to address the challenges ahead. First, it is expanding the role of majority leader. The new position, majority leader and chief of policy, will focus on solving problems using legislative solutions and oversight.

Sen. Brian Feldman (D-Montgomery), currently serving as chair of the Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment, will become the new majority leader and chief of policy.

To ensure the majority leader and chief of policy has the time to strategize and work closely with the leadership team and members of the majority caucus, the majority leader and chief of policy will not serve directly on one of the four policy committees but instead will serve ex officio on each standing committee. In this role, Feldman will attend hearings as needed and may serve as a voting member at any instance in which there is a tie vote in committee.

“I am confident that Senator Feldman’s breadth of experience and approach to the work will benefit the Senate as we embark on a new term,” said Senate President Bill Ferguson. “His experience as a standing committee chair will be invaluable to leadership development within the chamber.”

In addition to this expanded role in committee work, the majority leader and chief of policy will chair a newly reconstituted Senate Rules and Operations Committee. The vice chair of the Senate Rules and Operations Committee will be President Pro Tem Malcolm Augustine (D-Prince George’s).

The Rules and Operations Committee will have expanded jurisdiction over late bills and original jurisdiction on select multi-jurisdictional issues and state government organization and procedures, including in the judicial branch.

Sen. Mary Washington (D-Baltimore City) will become the majority whip.

“Senator Washington’s long tenure in both the Senate and House of Delegates, having served eight years in each chamber, has allowed her to develop strong relationships within the legislature," said Ferguson. “I look forward to her close counsel and support in navigating some of the most difficult issues of our time.”

Sen. Antonio Hayes (D-Baltimore City) will chair the Finance Committee, which handles issues related to healthcare, insurance, labor, business regulation, and economic development. The committee also will become primary jurisdiction for legislation related to artificial intelligence.

“The Senate Finance Committee sits at the center of policies that Marylanders rely on to ease burdens and build prosperity," said Ferguson. “Senator Hayes’ ability to collaborate, bring people to the table, and develop thoughtful solutions ensures the committee will be able to balance the needs of families and business across the state.”

Hayes will be the first Black man to chair the Finance Committee.

Working alongside Hayes will be Sen. Katie Fry Hester (D-Howard and Montgomery), who will become vice chair of the Finance Committee.

“The Finance Committee will benefit greatly from Senator Hester’s knowledge of state government and relationships within the Senate,” said Ferguson.

To fill the vacancy created by Feldman’s assumption of the new majority leader and chief of policy role, Senate President Ferguson is appointing Sen. Dawn Gile (D-Anne Arundel) chair of the Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment.

“Senator Gile has demonstrated the ability to navigate complex policy issues,” said Ferguson. “Her skillset will be critical as she leads the committee on issues most critical to Marylanders, like energy affordability and education.”

Assisting Gile in this work will be Sen. Ben Brooks (D-Baltimore County), who will become vice chair of the Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment and vacate the position of chair of the Executive Nominations Committee.

“Senator Brooks’ thoughtful approach and deep understanding of energy policy will assist the committee during the next term,” said Ferguson.

Rounding out key leadership changes, Ferguson has also appointed Sen. Cory McCray (D-Baltimore City) vice chair of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee and Sen. Alonzo Washington (D-Prince George’s) chair of the Senate Executive Nominations Committee.

“Senator McCray’s understanding of the budget process will be critical as we navigate fiscal pressures on existing state programs,” said Ferguson. “Also critical to the success of the state will be the careful review of new leaders in the executive branch. Senator Alonzo Washington’s attention to detail will guide the Executive Nominations Committee in the new term.”

Sen. Cheryl Kagan (D-Montgomery) will become the Senate liaison for national legislative affairs.

“Senator Kagan’s previous work with national organizations will assist the Senate as it expands engagement with other states to strengthen federalism at a time when states are best positioned to protect the U.S. Constitution and democracy,” said Ferguson.

The following committees will establish or maintain the following subcommittees and will be chaired by the following senators:

<u>Budget and Taxation Committee</u>

Capital Subcommittee - Sen. Craig Zucker (D-Montgomery).

Education, Business, and Administration Subcommittee - Sen. Cory McCray (D-Baltimore City).

Health and Human Services Subcommittee - Sen. Karen Lewis Young (D-Frederick).

Public Safety, Transportation, and Environment Subcommittee - Sen. Shelly Hettleman (D-Baltimore County).

Revenues Subcommittee - Sen. Jim Rosapepe (D-Prince George’s and Anne Arundel).

Pensions and Procurement Subcommittee - Sen. Malcolm Augustine (D-Prince George’s).

<u>Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment</u>

Energy Subcommittee - Sen. Kevin Harris (D-Prince George’s, Charles, and Calvert).

Elections Subcommittee - Sen. Cheryl Kagan (D-Montgomery).

All other leadership positions will remain the same unless/until changed in a future press release.

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