



Dear Friends,

Small businesses, agriculture, tourism, and watermen are all crucial to our way of life on the Shore. On the General Assembly website, you can see legislation sponsored so far this session that would affect these important economic drivers for our communities. I will keep you up-to-date on bills that may have a direct impact on the Shore as they move through the review and hearing process. Click the following links to read legislation that has been sponsored dealing with those issues:

- Click here to see legislation related to [Agriculture](#)
- Click here to see legislation related to [Tourism](#)
- Click here to see legislation related to [Small Business](#)
- Click here to see legislation related to [Watermen](#)
- Click here to search legislation by a [large variety of subjects](#)

As a member of the Senate Finance Committee, I am responsible for reviewing legislation related to energy, health insurance, labor law, transportation and a variety of other important issues. Last week, the Finance Committee had a busy week of bill hearings and voting sessions; follow everything that the Finance Committee does by [clicking here](#).

The Eastern Shore delegation had a productive meeting on Friday, January 17. Ted Dallas, secretary of the Department of Human Resources, spoke about efforts to move people off state assistance and provide them with job training. Col. Marcus Brown, superintendent of the Maryland State Police, spoke about the collaboration between the state police and local police agencies to combat drugs and drug trafficking. Raymond Skinner, secretary of the Department of Housing and Community Development, updated the delegation about funding for Hurricane Sandy relief, and other programs and accomplishments on the Eastern Shore.

Coming up this week, bill hearings will be held for several pieces of legislation that I have sponsored:

[Senate Bill 27, Tuesday, January 21st, 1:00 p.m.](#): This bill will require that an economic impact study be undertaken before the Department of Agriculture can implement the phosphorous management tool. In order to make the right decision, it is vital that state officials understand the full impact of the regulations that they propose. The hearing on SB 27 has been delayed due to the weather. It has been rescheduled to Tuesday, January 28th, 1:00pm. It will be held in the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee.

[SB 36, Wednesday, January 22nd, 1:00 p.m.](#): SB 36 will require the “POW/MIA” flag to be flown on the grounds of state buildings. It is important that we honor our brave combat veterans who have been deemed missing in action, or prisoners of war and whose fate is still unknown. The hearing for SB 36 will be held in the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee.

[SB 59, Wednesday, January 22nd, 1:00 p.m.](#): SB 59 will allow businesses to deduct the payroll taxes they pay on tipped employees from their state taxes. This legislation will put our local small businesses on equal footing with the federal tax code. The hearing for SB 59 will be held in the Budget & Taxation Committee.

***Due to weather and road conditions, the hearings for SB 36 and SB 59 have been postponed. I will let you know when a new date is assigned for these important bill hearings.**

If you need information on these bills, or any other bills, please reach out to our office at 410-841-3645 or toll-free at 1-800-492-7122, ex. 3645. You can also email us at james.mathias@senate.state.md.us. As always, if there is anything I can do to be of assistance to you, please contact me anytime.

Always working for you...and together getting the job done,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James Mathias". The signature is stylized with a large, looping initial "J" and a trailing flourish.