

County Council Of Howard County, Maryland

2019 Legislative Session

Legislative Day No. 3

Resolution No. 16 -2019

Introduced by: The Chairperson at the request of the County Executive

A RESOLUTION amending the Howard County Health Department Operating Budget, as reflected in Council Resolution No. 54-2018, to account for additional funding received from the State of Maryland; and generally relating to the Health Department Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2019.

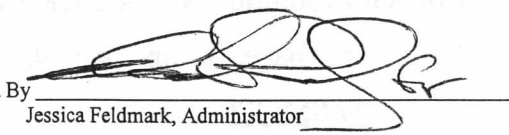
Introduced and read first time February 4, 2019.

By order 
Jessica Feldmark, Administrator

Read for a second time at a public hearing on February 19, 2019.

By order 
Jessica Feldmark, Administrator

This Resolution was read the third time and was Adopted___, Adopted with amendments Failed___, Withdrawn___, by the County Council on March 4, 2019.

Certified By 
Jessica Feldmark, Administrator

NOTE: [[text in brackets]] indicates deletions from existing law; TEXT IN SMALL CAPITALS indicates additions to existing law; ~~Strike-out~~ indicates material deleted by amendment; Underlining indicates material added by amendment

**HOWARD COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT BUDGET
FISCAL YEAR 2019**

| Revenues/Expenditures | Fiscal 2019 |
|---|--------------------|
| Revenues | |
| County Grant | 10,571,498 |
| County Collections | 750,000 |
| | <u>11,381,576</u> |
| State Grant | <u>12,956,576</u> |
| | <u>14,051,231</u> |
| | 550,000 |
| State Collections | <u>592,700</u> |
| Private and Other Revenues | 1,000,000 |
| Appropriation from Fund Balance | 890,000 |
| | <u>25,143,074</u> |
| | <u>26,718,074</u> |
| Total | <u>27,855,429</u> |
| Expenditures | |
| | 15,404,262 |
| Personnel Costs | <u>15,479,262</u> |
| | 6,774,511 |
| | <u>8,274,511</u> |
| Contractual Services | <u>9,411,866</u> |
| Supplies and Materials | 373,813 |
| Operating transfer | 1,700,488 |
| One-Time Initiatives from Fund Balance | 890,000 |
| | <u>25,143,074</u> |
| | <u>26,718,074</u> |
| Total | <u>27,855,429</u> |
| | |

Amendment 1 to Council Resolution No. 16-2019

**BY: The Chairperson at the request
of the County Executive**

**Legislative Day 4
Date: March 4, 2019**

Amendment No. 1

(This amendment adds State funding to the Operating Budget for the Health Department in the amount of:

- 1. \$1,094,655 for an Opioid Response Grant; and*
- 2. \$42,700 to reflect revenues generated from the Adult Evaluation Review Services Program.)*

1 On page 1, in line 6, strike “1,575,000” and substitute “2,712,355”.

2

3 On page 1, in line 13, insert:

4 “WHEREAS, additionally, the County has received an Opioid Grant in the amount of
5 \$1,094,655 and the Health Department operating budget needs to reflect increased revenue from
6 the Adult Evaluation Review Services Program in the amount of \$42,700; and”

7

8 On page 1, in line 22, strike “26,718,074” and substitute “27,855,429”.

9

10 In the chart, attached to the Resolution as filed:

- 11 • In the row titled “State Grant”, strike “12,956,576” and substitute “14,051,231”;
- 12 • In the row titled “State Collections”, strike “550,000” and substitute “592,700”;
- 13 • Under “Revenues”, in the row titled “Total”, strike “26,718,074” and substitute
14 “27,855,429”;
- 15 • Under “Expenditures”, in the row titled “Contractual Services” strike “8,274,511” and
16 substitute “9,411,866”; and
- 17 • Under “Expenditures”, in the row titled “Total” strike “26,718,074” and substitute
18 “27,855,429”.

ADOPTED

3/4/19

FAILED

SIGNATURE

[Handwritten Signature]

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By order _____
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Read for a second time at a public hearing on _____, 2019.

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This Resolution was read the third time and was Adopted ____, Adopted with amendments ____, Failed ____, Withdrawn ____, by the County Council on _____, 2019.

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Legislative Day 4
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14 “27,855,429”;
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16 substitute “9,411,866”; and
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Maura J. Rossman, M.D., Health Officer

To: Lonnie R. Robbins, Chief Administrative Officer
From: Maura J. Rossman, MD, Health Officer, Howard County Health Department
Date: January 31, 2019
Subject: Testimony on CR16-2019

Howard County Health Department requests to increase our FY19 spending appropriation by \$1,575,000, funding which will be provided to us by the Maryland Department of Health (MDH). There are no local funding matches required with this funding. This request is a result of three factors:

1. **State supplement to cover the increased costs to the Medicaid Transportation Program (\$1,446,992).** The Health Department operates the Medicaid Transportation program (50% state-funded, 50% federally-funded) program that provides transportation to medical appointments for Howard County Medicaid recipients who have no other means of transportation. At the end of FY18, the Health Department selected a new vendor for the program after the contract with the existing vendor was due to expire. The change in vendor resulted in approximately 50% increase in costs, which was commensurate with competing vendors. The Health Department submitted the FY19 budget in December 2017 before we had the rates from the new vendor. No County funds are used for this program. HCHD has submitted a budget supplement request to MDH which will be granted. **See Attachment A for supporting documentation.**
2. **Funding supplement to support 2% cost-of-living increases (\$75,000).** Funding supplement was granted to local health departments to cover the 2% COLA granted by Governor Hogan effective January 1, 2019. **See Attachment B for supporting documentation.**
3. **Cancer Grant awarded HCHD (\$40,000).** HCHD was awarded \$40,000 to implement *Establishing Partnerships through Community-Clinical Linkages to Increase Colorectal Cancer Screenings*. This funding will increase cancer screening for eligible Howard County residents. **See Attachment C for supporting documentation.**

After the pre-filing of this legislation, HCHD was notified on January 29, 2019 that it has received a State Opioid Response Grant in the amount of \$1,094,655. Amendment to CR16-2019 will be filed to reflect this additional funding.

Vickery, Antigone

To: Blue, Moenik; Sanders, Tammy; Rossman, Maura
Subject: RE: FY19 COLA Supplement

Attachment B

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Kimberley Slusar -MDH-** <kslusar@maryland.gov>
Date: Fri, Dec 28, 2018 at 2:38 PM
Subject: FY19 COLA Supplement
To: Amanda Haugh -DHMH- <amanda.haugh@maryland.gov>

Amanda,

Could you please forward this email to all the LHDs?

Attached is the FY19 COLA Distribution spreadsheet. Please submit your supplemental budget with the amount indicated for your county (Column A) and the amount (Column G).

I would also like to tell everyone that my last day with MDH is January 1st. I will be working at another State Agency starting January 2nd. If you have any questions or concerns after that date please contact Cheryl De Pinto at 410-767-5595 or email her at cheryl.depinto@maryland.gov.

Please let me know if you have any questions prior to my departure. It has been a pleasure working with each and every one of you. I would like to give my blessings to you and wish for success in everything that you do.

Kim

--

Kim Slusar

Office of Population Health Department, Fiscal Officer

Maryland Department of Health (MDH)

201 Preston Street, 4th Floor

Baltimore, MD 21201

Phone: [410-767-3431](tel:410-767-3431)

E-mail: kslusar@maryland.gov

Maryland Department of Health is committed to customer service. [Click here](#) to take the Customer Satisfaction Survey.

NOTICE: This message and the accompanying documents are intended only for the use of the individual or entity to which they are addressed and may contain information that is privileged, or exempt from disclosure under applicable law.

ADMIN
 FUNDING -
 NON
 CORE/CFR CFR STATE CORE

| Sum of M13_CUM_AMT INDEX_TITLE | FUND | | | Grand Total | FY 2019 COLA Distribution |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| | 0007 | 7000 | 7011 | | |
| ALLEGANY | 5,698,760.52 | 190,139.34 | 1,343,402.56 | 7,232,302.42 | \$94,020.00 |
| ANNE ARUNDEL | 2,955,106.77 | 378,217.09 | 1,528,928.72 | 4,862,252.58 | \$63,209.00 |
| CALVERT | 2,153,775.12 | 230,777.19 | 652,809.88 | 3,037,362.19 | \$39,486.00 |
| CAROLINE | 2,410,075.95 | 115,730.95 | 624,697.50 | 3,150,504.40 | \$40,957.00 |
| CARROLL | 4,834,111.98 | 201,967.77 | 1,720,638.45 | 6,756,718.20 | \$87,837.00 |
| CECIL | 3,771,374.69 | 250,863.14 | 1,420,297.01 | 5,442,534.84 | \$70,753.00 |
| CENTRAL OFFICE | 0.00 | | | 0.00 | \$0.00 |
| CHARLES | 4,513,978.50 | 171,485.88 | 1,571,449.13 | 6,256,913.51 | \$81,340.00 |
| DORCHESTER | 2,581,557.99 | 143,119.12 | 1,353,918.68 | 4,078,595.79 | \$53,022.00 |
| FREDERICK | 4,313,448.63 | 303,134.97 | 2,254,645.26 | 6,871,228.86 | \$89,326.00 |
| GARRETT | 3,278,917.30 | 157,185.80 | 614,923.17 | 4,051,026.27 | \$52,663.00 |
| HARFORD | 4,943,141.93 | 257,602.18 | 2,342,307.66 | 7,543,051.77 | \$98,060.00 |
| HOWARD | 3,795,356.82 | 306,196.96 | 1,722,105.21 | 5,823,658.99 | \$75,708.00 |
| KENT | 3,983,594.84 | 153,836.84 | 756,651.73 | 4,894,083.41 | \$63,623.00 |
| PRINCE GEORGE'S | 450,601.75 | | 593,833.49 | 1,044,435.24 | \$13,578.00 |
| QUEEN ANNES | 2,340,008.54 | 166,610.91 | 561,053.09 | 3,067,672.54 | \$39,880.00 |
| SAINT MARY'S | 1,332,909.32 | 174,003.37 | 1,014,896.94 | 2,521,809.63 | \$32,784.00 |
| SOMERSET | 3,021,308.64 | 176,300.44 | 519,698.67 | 3,717,307.75 | \$48,325.00 |
| TALBOT | 1,464,523.69 | 108,734.41 | 500,893.71 | 2,074,151.81 | \$26,964.00 |
| WASHINGTON | 6,184,575.21 | 244,587.39 | 1,766,536.38 | 8,195,698.98 | \$106,544.00 |
| WICOMICO | 4,922,759.16 | 185,208.40 | 803,719.85 | 5,911,687.41 | \$76,852.00 |
| WORCESTER | 4,039,014.35 | 188,678.43 | 808,396.15 | 5,036,088.93 | \$65,469.00 |
| Grand Total | 72,988,901.70 | 4,104,380.58 | 24,475,803.24 | 101,569,085.52 | \$1,320,400.00 |



8930 Stanford Blvd | Columbia, MD 21045
410.313.6300 - Voice/Relay
410.313.6303 - Fax
1.866.313.6300 - Toll Free

Maura J. Rossman, M.D., Health Officer

To: Lonnie R. Robbins, Chief Administrative Officer
From: Maura J. Rossman, MD, Health Officer, Howard County Health Department
Date: February 11, 2019
Subject: Testimony on CR16-2019 (supplemental)

This is a supplemental testimony to the memo dated January 31, 2019. Howard County Health Department requests to increase our FY19 spending appropriation by \$2,698,263, funding which will be provided to us by the Maryland Department of Health (MDH). There are no local funding matches required with this funding. This supplemental request is a result of two additional funding sources:

- 1. State Awarded HCHD an Opioid Response Grant (\$1,094,655).** This is part of a federal grant received by the State. This grant will be used to bring crisis response services to those suffering from opioid addiction and can be seen and treated at Grassroots Crisis Intervention and at Howard County Detention Center. **See Attachment D for supporting documentation.**
- 2. Increase of net collections, revenue generated from our Adult Evaluation Review Services Program (AERS) program (\$42,700).** The revenue earned from these services support the staff salaries who deliver the service. **See Attachment E for supporting documentation.**

Attachment D



MARYLAND Department of Health

Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Robert R. Neall, Secretary

January 24, 2019

Maura Rossman, M.D.
Health Officer
Howard County Department of Health
8903 Stanford Boulevard
Columbia, MD 21045

Re: Fiscal Year 2019 State Opioid Response Grant Award

Dear Dr. Rossman:

Based on your expressed interest and previously submitted project narratives, the Maryland Department of Health has accepted your initial application for SOR grant funding and is pleased to inform you that first phase funding of the year one State Opioid Response (SOR) grant in the amount of \$1,094,655 is being awarded to Howard County. This award amount represents 80% of your total year one SOR grant award funding which runs through September 29, 2019.

The special initiatives being funded as part of this FFY19 SOR grant are:

- **Crisis Walk-in and Stabilization Centers: \$1,063,920**
- **MAT with Criminal Justice Population/Reentry (Vivitrol Project): \$30,7³/₂₅**

Specific details pertaining to this award are as follows:

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Grant Name: | State Opioid Response (SOR) |
| Grant Number: | BH 207 SOR |
| Project Number: | F718N |
| FY 2019/FY20 Award: | \$1,094,655 (January 1, 2019 – September 29, 2019) |
| Source of Funds: | Federal Funds |
| CFDA No.: | 93.788 |
| Federal Tracking Number: | 19-9142 |

This funding spans two state fiscal years and as a result, two budgets must be submitted to reflect the anticipated expenditures. The budgets should reflect the period of January 1, 2019 through June 30, 2019; and July 1, 2019 through September 29, 2019. Please submit the budgets to mdh.bha_finance@maryland.gov no later than the close of business on February 8, 2019. Conditions of Award for these initiatives will be forwarded under separate cover.

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT BUDGET PACKAGE
PROGRAM BUDGET (4542A)

Attachment E

FUNDING ADMINISTRATION: OHS - Healthchoice & Acute Care Adm
LOCAL HEALTH DEPT: Howard County
ADDRESS: 8930 Stanford Blvd
CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE: Columbia, MD 21045
TELEPHONE #: 410 313-7896
PROJECT TITLE: AERS
AWARD NUMBER: MA139GES
CONTACT PERSON: Mosemit M Bire
FEDERAL I.D. #: 52-1882029
INDEX: 20013
AWARD PERIOD: July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019
FISCAL YEAR: 2019
COUNTY PCA: F720N
FILE NAME: (see instructions) 19-HOWARD-F720N-MA139GES-MCD1
IFY County Court PCA Grant

DATE SUBMITTED: 01/04/2019
ORIGINAL BUDG. (YR): N
MODIFICATION: #1
SUPPLEMENT: #
REDUCTION: #

| | Current Budget | MOH Funds Mod/Suppl/Red | Local Funds Mod/Suppl/Red | Other Funds Mod/Suppl/Red | Total Mod/Suppl/Red |
|---------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Direct Costs Net of Collections | (10,842.00) | 6.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Indirect Costs | 40,102.00 | | | | 0.00 |
| Total Costs Net of Collections | 29,260.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| MOH Funding | 29,260.00 | | | | 0.00 |
| Local Funding | | | | | 0.00 |
| All Other Funding | | | | | 0.00 |

MDH Program Approval/Comments

DGLHA Approval/Comments
< DGLHA Log In ID

0.00

| (1) LINE ITEM NO. | (2) LINE ITEM DESCRIPTION | (3) MOH FUNDING REQUEST | (4) OTHER DIRECT FUNDING | | | (7) TOTAL PROGRAM BUDGET (COL 3 + COL 4 + COL 5) | (8) MOH BUDGET MOD, SUPP OR REDUCTION CHANGES (+ OR -) | (9) LOCAL BUDGET MOD, SUPP OR REDUCTION CHANGES (+ OR -) | (10) OTHER BUDGET MOD, SUPP OR REDUCTION CHANGES (+ OR -) | (11) TOTAL OF MODIFICATIONS, SUPPLEMENTS OR REDUCTIONS (Col 8 + Col 9 + Col 10) |
|----------------------------|---|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|--|---|--|--|---|---|
| | | | LOCAL FUNDING | ALL OTHER FUNDING | TOTAL OTHER FUNDING (COL 4 + COL 5) | | | | | |
| 1 | 0111 Salaries | 227,564 | | | 0 | 278,499 | 50,915 | | | 50,915 |
| 2 | 0121 FICA | 16,577 | | | 0 | 20,263 | 3,688 | | | 3,688 |
| 3 | 0131 Retirement | 43,569 | | | 0 | 54,147 | 10,178 | | | 10,178 |
| 4 | 0139 Def Compensation | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 5 | 0141 Health Insurance | 21,950 | | | 0 | 21,950 | | | | 0 |
| 6 | 0142 Retiree Health Insurance | 12,731 | | | 0 | 12,731 | | | | 0 |
| 7 | 0161 Unemployment Insurance | 607 | | | 0 | 741 | 134 | | | 134 |
| 8 | 0162 Workmen's Compensation | 1,392 | | | 0 | 1,532 | 140 | | | 140 |
| 9 | 0171 Overtime Earnings | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 10 | 0181 Additional Assistance | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 11 | 0182 Adjustments | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 12 | 0201 Consultants | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 13 | 0280 Special Payments Payroll | 62,386 | | | 0 | 37,330 | (25,056) | | | (25,056) |
| 14 | 0291 FICA | 4,773 | | | 0 | 2,895 | (1,878) | | | (1,878) |
| 15 | 0292 Unemployment Insurance | 175 | | | 0 | 105 | (70) | | | (70) |
| 16 | 0299 Contractual Self-Salaries & Fringe | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 17 | 0301 Postage | 2 | | | 0 | 2 | | | | 0 |
| 18 | 0304 Cellular Telephone | 3,600 | | | 0 | 7,560 | 3,960 | | | 3,960 |
| 19 | 0405 In-state Travel | 1,600 | | | 0 | 2,800 | 1,200 | | | 1,200 |
| 20 | 0409 Out-of-State Travel | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 21 | 0415 Training | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 22 | 0420 Stipend/Tuition | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 23 | 0604 Electricity | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 24 | 0613 Water | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 25 | 0615 Utilities - Combined | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 26 | 0701 Gas and Oil | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 27 | 0703 Insurance & Tele | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 28 | 0705 Vehicle Maintenance & Repair | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 29 | 0801 Advertising | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 30 | 0803 Client Transportation | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 31 | 0812 Personnel Investigations | 76 | | | 0 | 76 | | | | 0 |
| 32 | 0816 Language | 600 | | | 0 | 600 | | | | 0 |
| 33 | 0833 Repair & Maintenance | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 34 | 0834 Photocopy Rental | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 35 | 0835 Equipment Service | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 36 | 0838 Software | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 37 | 0839 Software Maintenance | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 38 | 0853 Maintenance | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 39 | 0854 Housekeeping | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 40 | 0856 Indirect Cost | 40,822 | | | 0 | 40,102 | (720) | | | (720) |
| 41 | 0860 Laboratory Services | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 42 | 0869 Photography (Commercial) | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 43 | 0873 Printing | 0 | | | 0 | 250 | 250 | | | 250 |
| 44 | 0881 Purchase of Care | 6,700 | | | 0 | 6,700 | | | | 0 |
| 45 | 0885 Trash Disposal | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 46 | 0886 Human Service Contracts | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 47 | 0899 Special Projects | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 48 | 0909 Cleaning Supplies | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 49 | 0919 Educational Supplies | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 50 | 0924 Food | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 51 | 0953 Medicine, Drugs & Chemicals | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 52 | 0957 Medical Supplies | 500 | | | 0 | 500 | | | | 0 |
| 53 | 0965 Office Supplies | 3,000 | | | 0 | 3,000 | | | | 0 |
| 54 | 0986 Other Supplies | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 55 | 1060 Computer Equipment | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 56 | 1073 Office Equipment | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 57 | 1180 Personal Computer Equipment | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 58 | 1192 Medical Equipment | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 59 | 1193 Office Equipment | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 60 | 1331 Dues & Memberships | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 61 | 1332 Insurance | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 62 | 1334 Rent | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 63 | 1336 Subscriptions | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 64 | 1600 Interest Income | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 65 | 1601 Stop Case Mgmt | (414,757) | | | 0 | (439,194) | (44,347) | | | (44,347) |
| 66 | 1603 Self-Pay Collections | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 67 | 1606 Medicaid Collections | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 68 | 1607 Medicare Collections | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 69 | 1609 PASARR | (5,027) | | | 0 | (3,380) | 1,647 | | | 1,647 |
| 70 | 1612 County Contribution | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 71 | | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 72 | | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 73 | | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 74 | | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 75 | | 0 | | | 0 | 0 | | | | 0 |

Good evening. My name is Annalisse Daly. In your recent joint meeting with the Board of Education, you discussed what is known as “hazard busing.” Typically, students living less than a given radius from their school are designated walkers. However, when the route is too dangerous to traverse on foot, Howard County pays to bus those students in—at a tune of \$68,000 per bus per year. Sometimes the hazards are entirely preventable, however. At Guilford Elementary, students as close as 0.1 mile from the school are bused in for want of a simple sidewalk. As you learned in your joint meeting, some of these sidewalks have been planned and funded but have remained unbuilt for almost a decade. This is the case with capital budget #J2407, for example, where following through on this project, as well as funding an additional 0.3 a mile of new sidewalk would safely connect a total of 504 homes to Guilford Elementary. Together these would eliminate the need for 1-2 school buses after consolidating routes and save the school system tens of thousands—or hundreds of thousands—of dollars per year. Since money for the school system comes directly from the county, this would save money for all of us.

And we needn't pay full price for this project! Grant money from the federal Safe Routes to School program will pay up to 80% of the costs for implementing walking and biking infrastructure around K-8 schools. That does not include high schools, but it means we can significantly defray the upfront costs by prioritizing sidewalk networks affected by the grant. We should absolutely target projects that would eliminate hazard busing, but we can and should take advantage of the grant to improve other areas of our infrastructure. For example, a friend of mine bikes to school with her children to St. John's Elementary, but wouldn't dare let them go alone over the dangerously ambiguous Ridgewood Rd. and Chatham Road intersection. The homes in her neighborhood are designated walking areas, but many parents drive their children instead of walking or biking because places like this intersection feel too risky even for adults.

And they have some cause for concern. Just this last December, we had two separate pedestrian fatalities here in Howard County: one teenager, and one 43-year-old man. Last year was also the deadliest on record along Route 1, where five pedestrians died trying to walk along or cross the road. Granted, these fatalities happened along unusually busy roads and many of the deadliest roads are state funded, not county roads. But the same route that has been deemed too hazardous for my children to walk to school is the exact same route that my neighbor Renee walks every day to access the public transit bus stop. The same crosswalk that would safely shepherd children across Oakland Mills Road on their way to Guilford Elementary could just as easily shepherd the runners and dog walkers who risk that intersection every morning. The same protected bike lanes that allow students to bike safely to school would also protect the adult bikers and even people in motorized wheelchairs. This infrastructure helps everyone, not just kids.

As you consider the budget this year, I respectfully request that you prioritize sidewalks and biking infrastructure. Using grants, we can stretch the dollars that are already there. Increased funding on strategic projects can minimize hazard busing to use our dollars more efficiently. And in the end, we can provide a safe, equitable means of moving around for all members of our community, whether they drive a car or not.