



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Jan H. Gardner
County Executive

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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CONTACT: [Vivian Laxton](#)
Communications Director, 301-600-1315

Corrects date

Legislative Town Hall Scheduled for September 29

County Executive to Host Hybrid Event for Public Input

FREDERICK, Md. – Frederick County Executive Jan Gardner invites the public to her annual Legislative Town Hall to suggest or comment on legislative priorities for the upcoming session of the Maryland General Assembly. Executive Gardner's priority legislation this year is a bill to protect forested land. The hybrid Town Hall will be held Thursday, September 29, beginning at 7 p.m.

“Listening to residents is essential to providing good government,” Executive Gardner said. “Frederick County is unique among charter governments with our process, which ensures everyone has an opportunity to weigh in on our legislative package.”

Executive Gardner's priority bill, *Forest Conservation – Forest Conservation Fee*, would keep the state's long-standing forest banking program in place until 2024 so that existing forested land can continue to be preserved. Two years ago, the program was effectively halted while a review was conducted. Forest banking has preserved more than 2,500 acres of forest in Frederick County. They account for 40% of the total acreage of existing forest preserved by conservation easements. Property owners who began the process to preserve environmentally sensitive areas in Frederick County are currently unable to finalize their plans because of the changes made in 2020. The proposed bill would also extend the timeline by which local governments can use deposited money in the Forest Conservation Fund, a provision requested by the Town of Emmitsburg.

A second piece of legislation would allow for polygraph tests for employees of the Division of Public Works who are stationed at the Adult Detention Center. The bill would improve security and safety at the detention center for all who work or are detained there.

The County's 2023 legislative package will include bills and advocacy requested by the County Council and community organizations. The County Council supported a measure proposed by Council Member Jessica Fitzwater to address domestic violence issues. Prior to the town hall, copies of requests submitted by community organizations will be posted to the County's website at [FrederickCountyMD.gov/Legislative](#).

Executive Gardner will present the draft legislation, public input, and suggested positions to the County Executive-Elect in November.

The public is invited to comment on any of the proposals, or suggest additional topics for consideration, during the hybrid town hall meeting at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 29. The meeting will be televised live on FCG TV, cable channels 19/1085, and webcast at [FrederickCountyMD.gov/LegislativeTownHall](#). Callers may listen to the town hall and speak during the meeting by calling toll-free 855-925-2801, meeting code 8634. For more information, contact Government Affairs Director Joy Schaefer at 301-600-1621 or via e-mail at jschaefer@FrederickCountyMD.gov.

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