



MARYLAND STATE ARCHIVES
FISCAL 2020 OPERATING BUDGET TESTIMONY

Before the Senate Health and Human Services Subcommittee, February 8, 2019

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Subcommittee:

I am Timothy D. Baker, State Archivist and Commissioner of Land Patents. With me today are Elaine Rice Bachmann, the Deputy State Archivist, and Nassir Rezvan, Director of Administration.

I would also like to recognize and introduce our new Legislative Officer, Maya Davis. She has been with us for a number of years and ably serves as one of our senior researchers at the Archives. She has been a key contributor in our efforts to study the legacy of slavery in Maryland. I also want to publicly recognize Elizabeth Newell who retired as our Legislative Officer just a few days ago. We thank her for her service at the Archives, and some of you who have been around for a bit longer may remember her many years of great service to the Maryland General Assembly.

For your reference and further reading, our annual report is provided on our website in the form of Minutes and Agenda of the Hall of Records Commission, which we publish electronically following each meeting at

<http://msa.maryland.gov/msa/intromsa/hrc/html/hrc.html>

I would like to thank Sierra Boney for her complete and thoughtful analysis of our budget. She always does an excellent job and I appreciate her service to us all.

While there are not, thankfully, any tough budget issues to address today, I would like to make mention of a few items of interest.

Several years ago we were fortunate to be able to purchase a building that the Social Security Administration had used to house their paper records. The purchase was made possible by the sale of tax-exempt bonds by the Maryland Economic Development Corporation (MEDCO). The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 will likely have a negative impact on the Archives' budget going forward. The Act decreased the maximum corporate tax rate from 35% to 21%, which resulted in decreases to the after-tax return for banks that purchased tax-exempt debt, including the debt for the Archives' project. The bond holder has adjusted the interest rate to maintain its after tax

yield. The adjustment results in more than a \$40,000 difference in the annual amount Archives is required to pay MEDCO. The bank has also said the obligation should be retroactive to the passage of the Act. Funds have not been budgeted for this purpose. Archives will work with MEDCO and DBM to resolve.

We just left the kickoff meeting with the Department of General Services and the contractors we will be working with to design and fabricate the interpretive statues of Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass. These two installations represent the continuation of our implementation of the State House Visitor Experience Master Plan. They also represent something much, much more. If you think about it - ask yourself - who are the true historic heroes of Maryland. In addition to the signers and Lords Baltimore, all represented here in the State House, there are some specific heroes that come to mind: Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Benjamin Banneker, Matthew Henson, Thurgood Marshall. My staff and I were thrilled when the State House Trust and the Leadership of the General Assembly directed this appropriate tribute to these two native Marylanders, who made such an important contribution to our state and our nation's history.

With the kickoff meeting held just this morning, our staff are now moving forward on the design and development of these interpretive statues of Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass for installation in the Old House of Delegates Chamber in 2020 - earlier if we can. These bronze statues will be developed based on curatorial direction in order for them to be incorporated into the interpretation of the overall room. Like the statue of George Washington in the Old Senate Chamber these will be 'forensic' statues of Tubman and Douglass, and will be interacted with by visitors. In order for these two new figures to have parity with the Washington statue, Commission staff have chosen to work again with the creative team at StudioEIS to fabricate the statues. Maya Davis of the Legacy of Slavery in Maryland program was able to document the presence of Frederick Douglass in the Old House of Delegates Chamber in 1874, providing another layer of interpretation for the new statue.

We can't help but notice the empty space that is now Lawyer's Mall. We had to temporarily remove most of the elements of the Thurgood Marshall Memorial to accommodate a vitally important infrastructure project that could wait no longer. I assure you there are plans to bring back the memorial in due course, but for months now I have felt that there had to be some place we could temporarily put at least the statue of Marshall back on display. I am pleased to announce here today that we are working with DGS and the staff at the Courts of Appeal building to temporarily display the statue in front of the Robert C. Murphy Courts of Appeal Building.

Last year you asked me to comment on the ongoing mold remediation project at our main facility here in Annapolis. As you know a considerable amount of money had to be spent to eliminate the mold and undertake a variety of work to seal the building and prevent moisture from entering. The project also called for a large dehumidification system to control the levels of relative humidity going forward. I am pleased to tell you that nearly all that work has been

completed. There is just one final thing that needs to be done to protect the Archives and ensure the investment that has been made does not go to waste: We need a new roof.

DGS Annapolis Public Buildings and Grounds has formally requested funds for the new roof. They have also done a good job at tracking down and stopping leaks, and they are committed to continuing to patch the roof until it can be replaced. We eagerly await funding approval.

I would like to now mention two publications which I think will be of interest to you. Last year we told you that we were in the final stages of authoring a book celebrating the 150th anniversary of Government House. '*A Dwelling House and Other Conveniences...*' *A History of Maryland's Government House* was published last year and was underwritten by the Foundation for the Preservation of Government House of Maryland, Inc. I would like to, again, thank First Lady Yumi Hogan for her support.

The Archives is also very pleased to be publishing the first ever comprehensive history of the historic legislative chambers in the Maryland State House. This book was commissioned by the General Assembly to fulfill President Miller and Speaker Busch's request that all members of the legislature be made aware of the historic importance of the Old Senate Chamber and the Old House of Delegates Chamber, where so many important events in Maryland and American history have occurred. This book, *Maryland's Historic Legislative Chambers: Recreating the Rooms Where History Happened*, will be published in time for Maryland Day.

Finally and in conclusion, I would like to congratulate all of the many new members of the Maryland General Assembly. For your benefit I've put together this summary briefing on the Maryland State Archives. Thank you for your attention today, and please let me know if you have any questions.

The State Archives is pleased to provide this document as agency background.

What we do

The Maryland State Archives (MSA) safeguards and makes available the permanently valuable records, reports, and publications of Maryland State, county and municipal government, as well as historically significant records of private persons and organizations. MSA is also the custodian of the State's fine art collections.

Some interesting facts about the Archives:

- The Maryland State Archives is by far the largest state archives in the country, with nearly 400,000 cubic feet of holdings. This is because of Maryland's unique way of housing permanent record material in one consolidated agency for all three branches of government (including judicial records), and all levels of State and local government.

- The State Archives maintains the largest “electronic archives” of any state archives. Maryland achieves great efficiencies by providing online access to critical records, such as land records (deeds, mortgages, etc.), in a statewide, fully searchable database online - the only state to do so.
- Published by the State Archives, the *Maryland Manual On-Line* presents a guide to Maryland and its government. This overview shows the organizational structure and staffing of the [executive](#), [legislative](#) and [judicial](#) branches of Maryland State, county and municipal government. It is unique in the nation. Showing agency personnel, budgets, and organizational charts, it describes the historical evolution of agencies, their origin and functions, and lists and provides access to mandated reports. The Maryland Manual has been published in print since 1896. The *Maryland Manual On-Line* (mdmanual.net) has been accessible on the Internet since December 1996.
- Criminal Background Checks - The State Archives serves an important role in assisting public safety and law enforcement agencies with criminal background checks by conducting research into arrests and dispositions, as well as providing authenticated records to law enforcement agencies.
- Through the Commission on Artistic Property, the State Archives cares for and manages over 3,500 objects in the State’s fine art collection and develops interpretive exhibits throughout the complex.
- MSA provides access to critical transactional records that document the relationship between citizens and government. To conduct all manner of personal business, citizens need a variety of authenticated legal documents. Birth, marriage, and death certificates, court verdicts, deeds and mortgages, tax assessments, wills, and other materials are available through the State Archives. In FY 2018, the State Archives processed a total of 74,575 inquiries from Searchroom patrons; phone, email and mail orders; and interagency requests.
- Through the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), the State Archives staff have direct engagement teaching students in Maryland’s classrooms. We also conduct professional development for educators and serve on MSDE curriculum content and standards development committees. Our professionals and our collections are having a meaningful impact in the state’s classrooms.

Budget Summary

For many years the Archives was nearly 80% funded with Special Funds. Most came through the Judiciary from the Circuit Court Real Property Records Improvement Fund. During the 2016 Legislative Session the decision was made to transition the Archives to being primarily funded with General Funds. Under that agreement, the Judiciary continues to provide \$500,000 per year to support the archival program.

Facilities

The Archives are housed in two separate facilities: the state-operated building on Rowe Boulevard in Annapolis and our adjunct warehouse in Windsor Mill, Maryland. DGS recently completed a major mold remediation and HVAC repair project within our Annapolis facility. The

Annapolis building, however, is still in need of a new roof, and we are hopeful that the roof project will be included in the DGS facilities renewal program.

Personnel and Succession planning

Like other agencies, the State Archives has many employees who will be eligible to retire in the near future. Succession planning and retention of employees with the necessary knowledge of Archives operations will be important issues for the Archives to address in the near term.

Policy / Program Issues

The State House Visitor Experience Master Plan

The Archives, under the auspices of the State House Trust, is working with DGS to design and install statues of Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass in the Old House Chamber. Upon the successful completion of that project we hope to turn our sights to completing work on the Old Treasury Building - the oldest public building in Annapolis.

Records Management in Maryland

For the Archives to carry out its mission of identifying and caring for records of permanent value, there must be robust, on-going, and successful records management programs within state and local government agencies. Strong advocacy from our elected leaders and adequate resources will be necessary for us to carry out this basic, good government function.

Respectfully submitted and for more information:

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