Legislative Leadership and Attorney General Announce Legislation to Protect Maryland Citizens

Legislation will ensure the state is ready to defend against actions from President Donald Trump

Annapolis, MD (January 31, 2017) – Speaker of the House Michael E. Busch, Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr, and Attorney General Brian Frosh, joined by Democratic Senators and Delegates today announced a package of legislation to make certain that Maryland will be prepared for potential negative actions from President Trump and the Federal Government.

“After the first 11 days of the Trump Administration, we have cause to be concerned about the future health of the Chesapeake Bay, the strength of our public schools, and civil rights for every Marylander,” said Speaker Michael E. Busch. “Maryland Democrats will continue to stand up for underrepresented communities. We look forward to working together with Governor Hogan to insulate Maryland from the potential disastrous impact of this federal administration.”

“While we hope for the best from President Trump and the Federal Government, we must prepare for the worst,” stated Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr. “These initiatives represent our resolve to protect Maryland’s middle class from going backwards. We stand here firm in our agreement to work together to defend our state and her citizens in any way that we can.”

"If the last eleven days have shown us anything, they have shown that we need to take action to protect our citizens. The Trump Administration threatens our health care, our civil rights and our natural resources,” said Attorney General Frosh. "These bills are tools we need to protect Marylanders."

The legislative package introduced today includes:

Maryland Defense Act of 2017 (Kasemeyer & Madaleno/Rosenberg) – Legislation and Resolution to provide the Attorney General with the directive and the resources to engage in offensive or defensive action to protect citizens of Maryland from harmful federal efforts. The Bill & Resolution also outlines steps the Attorney General in consultation with the Governor, and allocates $3 million a year including five staff members in the Attorney General’s office to take the necessary actions.
Repeal of Affordable Care Act Resolution (Conway/Moon) – The Affordable Care Act (ACA) provides or helps to provide health insurance to over 400,000 Marylanders, assists seniors with prescription drugs, eliminates pre-existing condition barriers and allows children to stay on their parent health insurance. President Trump and the Republican Congress have been clear that repealing this important legislation is a top priority – even without a replacement plan. Maryland is at risk of losing $7.7 billion over the next 4 years should this happen. This Resolution calls on Congressional Delegation and the Governor to strongly oppose and resist any repeal of the ACA.

Maryland Health Insurance Coverage Protection Act (Middleton/Pena-Melnyk) – Marylanders should have access to high quality healthcare, regardless of pre-existing conditions. In light of the President and Republican Congress pushing to repeal the ACA, the General Assembly will create the Maryland Health Insurance Coverage Protection Commission with the purpose to monitor work on the Federal level and prepare Maryland to best react should President Trump and the Republicans in Congress decide to take away health insurance coverage from the hard working middle class.

Maryland Financial Consumer Protection Task Force (Rosapepe/Frick) – After the Great Recession, real progress was made to provide consumers with real financial protection, and ensure that banks couldn’t hurt the American consumer. With the rhetoric in Washington, it is only a matter of time until President Trump and Congress begin to repeal these measures. This legislation establishes the Maryland Financial Consumer Protection Task Force to monitor federal changes and keep the Governor and General Assembly updated on those changes.

Constitutional Convention Withdrawal (Madaleno/Frick) – Several times in the past century Maryland signed off as signatories to Article V Conventions – to allow for a Constitutional Convention on a variety of issues. With the current political climate now is not the time to rewrite the Constitution to endanger Americans. This Resolution will withdraw Maryland from all previous Article V Convention calls to make more certain that there will not be a Constitutional Convention under President Trump.

Additional Quotes from Bill Sponsors

Senator Middleton
“If President Trump repeals the ACA, the State could lose $3.5 billion dollars from the Federal Medicaid reimbursement and the Hospital reimbursement from Medicare which would be devastating to our economy and the health of our citizens.”

Senator Kasemeyer
“I hear daily from constituents in Howard & Baltimore County who have faith in their state elected officials, but are concerned about the federal government and what actions they may take. Our Attorney General can continue to be a nonpartisan advocate for our state and make certain that our environment, economic security, and civil liberties are protected.”

Senator Rosapepe
"President Trump and his Wall Street cabinet are already plotting to unleash the wolves of Wall Street, threatening the jobs, homes, and retirement plans of working families. They want to repeal the Dodd Frank law, just as they want to take away health insurance and environmental protections. We say: not in Maryland. Our bill creates a watchdog group to call out Trump's attacks on our financial security and plan how to protect Marylanders.”
Senator Conway
“The Affordable Care Act provides health insurance to hundreds of thousands of Marylanders who are finally able to get the health coverage they deserve. President Trump and the Republican Congress have made this legislation their top target, and we expect Maryland’s Governor & Congressional Delegation to stand with Marylanders to defend against these actions.”

Senator Madaleno
“This simple resolution rescinds all of Maryland's prior calls for a US Constitutional Convention. Maryland is on record four times calling for a constitutional convention throughout our history and the most recent call is from 45 years ago. I believe the General Assembly should be working to represent today's Marylanders, so we should wipe the slate clean and move forward.”

Delegate Rosenberg
“When the rights and well-being of Marylanders are jeopardized by actions taken by President Trump or the Congress, Attorney General Brian Frosh should be able to represent us in court. Under the Maryland Defense Act of 2017, Attorney General Frosh could protect our interests that are affected by the executive order on immigration.”

Delegate Frick
"The Trump campaign threatened some of the fundamental principles of American society embedded in the Constitution: freedom of religion, freedom of the press, birthright citizenship, and more. The Trump Administration is already making good on those threats. We cannot empower this Administration with the ability to rewrite the Bill of Rights.”

Delegate Moon
“To repeal the Affordable Care Act is immoral. But to repeal it with no backup plan is downright reckless and unforgivable. Over 400,000 Marylanders now have health insurance thanks to Obamacare, with the most beneficiaries coming not just from Baltimore City, but from the Eastern Shore and Western Maryland. Plain and simple, Obamacare repeal is a war on rural Maryland, a war on Baltimore, and a war on Maryland values. Access to health care should not be a party-line issue in Maryland.”

Delegate Pena-Melnyk
“We fought hard in Maryland to make health care available and affordable to all our citizens. We need this commission to protect Maryland families from budget-busting health care bills.”

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