



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Attorney General Frosh Applauds Passage of 2017 Legislative Priorities**

#### ***General Assembly Adopts Efforts Granting Attorney General Additional Authority to Act on Behalf of Marylanders; Prohibit Generic Drug Price Gouging; Other Efforts to Protect Financial Security and Public Safety of Marylanders***

**BALTIMORE, MD (April 11, 2017)** – Following the conclusion of the 2017 Legislative Session, Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh commended members of the General Assembly for passage of several pieces of legislation that protect the health, financial security, personal security and public safety of Marylanders.

“Working together with advocates and members of the General Assembly, we made great progress this year protecting Marylanders from prescription drug price gouging, and ensuring fairness in our bail system,” said Attorney General Frosh. “I appreciate the hard work of the members of the legislature in granting the Office of Attorney General the authority to act on behalf of Marylanders to protect our environment, the healthcare of our citizens, and the threat of other potentially harmful federal actions.”

#### **Legislation Passed During the 2017 Legislative Session:**

- **Maryland Defense Act** – The Joint Resolution enables the Maryland Attorney General to sue the federal government for illegal or unconstitutional actions.
- **Bail Reform** – Several attempts to weaken or reverse a recent judicial rule limiting the use of bail and instructing judges to impose the “least onerous” conditions when setting terms of a defendant’s pretrial release failed, allowing to the rule to stand. “I am pleased the members of the General Assembly chose to reject attempts to undermine the rule recently adopted by the Court of Appeals, ensuring defendants are not detained solely because they are unable to afford bail,” said Attorney General Frosh.
- **Prescription Drug Price Gouging** – The first of its kind in the country, the new law prohibits unconscionable price increases of off-patent generic drugs and authorizes the Maryland Attorney General to file suit against drug manufactures over suspected price gouging.

- **Sexual Assault Victims' Rights** – Implements recommendations of the Attorney General's report on untested sexual assault evidence kits by requiring retention of kits for a minimum of 20 years except in certain circumstances, notifying victims before kit destruction, and creating a sexual assault evidence kit oversight committee chaired by the Attorney General. The legislature also increased resources to support victims of sexual assault.
- **Maryland Securities Act -Vulnerable Adults** - Successful amendment to the Maryland Securities Act protecting seniors and vulnerable adults from financial exploitation. Provides regulatory relief to Maryland businesses, and supports securities enforcement authority.
- **Credit Report Security Freeze** – Provides Maryland residents the right to freeze their credit reports without paying the \$15 fee. Freezing a credit report is one of the most effective ways of preventing identity theft because it prevents any potential creditor from viewing a copy of a consumer's credit report without the consumer's express permission.
- **Personal Information Protection Act** - This bill came out of the Cybersecurity Council chaired by the Attorney General and updates Maryland's Personal Information Protection Act to recognize that identity thieves can steal someone's identity with a lot less information than was required when the act first passed. Accordingly, the bill broadens the types of personal information that a business is required to protect and for which a business is required to provide notice to consumers in the event of a data breach.
- **Indirect Purchasers** – Amended the Maryland Antitrust Act, permitting consumers and businesses who have suffered overcharges because of price-fixing or other antitrust violations to recover treble damages whether or not they purchased directly from the antitrust violator. Under federal antitrust law, only those who deal directly with an antitrust violator have the right to recover damages and they can recover even if they pass the overcharges down the chain of distribution to consumers.
- **Maryland Financial Consumer Protection Commission** – members will monitor and assess the impact of potential changes to federal financial industry laws and regulations and to provide recommendations for federal and State action that will protect the residents of the State in financial transactions and when receiving financial services.
- **Maryland Health Insurance Coverage Protection Commission** – Members will monitor and assess the impact of potential and actual federal changes to health care programs and provide recommendations for State and local action to protect Marylanders' access to affordable health coverage.