

JEANNIE HADDAWAY-RICCIO
Legislative District 37B
Caroline, Dorchester, Talbot,
and Wicomico Counties

ASSISTANT MINORITY WHIP

Chair, Talbot County Delegation

Economic Matters Committee

Joint Committee on Federal Relations



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Legislative Wrap Up March 5, 2010



Delegate Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio met with Dana Perino this week. Perino is the former White House Press Secretary for George W. Bush.

Resident Delegate Legislation

Delegate Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio has introduced legislation (House Bill 47) that would amend Maryland's constitution in an effort to provide every county with a resident delegate. This issue is of particular interest to Caroline County since they have not had a resident delegate for over thirty years. According to Haddaway-Riccio, this would be a good year to pass the legislation because of the Census and redistricting. A hearing will be held on the bill on Monday in the Rules and Executive Nominations Committee at 2pm.

Truancy Courts

This week, the House Judiciary Committee held a hearing on House Bill 901 which was introduced by Delegate Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio. The bill would allow Talbot and Caroline Counties to participate in a truancy court pilot program. Truancy Courts fall under the Office of Problem Solving Courts in the Maryland Judiciary and are aimed at improving school. These programs provide an alternative to strict punishment (which often applies to parents and guardians) and brings the school system, the family and the courts together to address problems with youth who are chronically truant.

Haddaway-Riccio explained to the committee that truancy in school is often a sign of underlying problems in a youth's life and that having a court dedicated to the issue would allow preventative services to be delivered to those youths. A recent Department of Justice study revealed that truancy is a significant risk factor for substance abuse, gang activity and dropping out of school and that approximately two-thirds of serious violent offenders and half of serious nonviolent offenders had been truants in their youth. Seven other counties in Maryland are authorized to have truancy courts.

Bisphenol-A in Children's Products

Delegate Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio voted in favor of a bill that prohibits the sale, manufacture and distribution of children's products that contain bisphenol-A (BPA), a harmful compound found in some plastics. The bill also requires manufacturers to use materials that are the least toxic alternative available on the market. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), BPA can leach from reusable food and water containers and baby bottles. While the U.S. Food and Drug Administration used to assert that BPA packaging was safe, more recently FDA has cited concerns that it may have an effect on the brain, behavior, and prostate gland of fetuses, infants, and young children. Of the bill, Delegate Haddaway-Riccio stated, "It's important to protect the health of babies and children, especially when they are in the developmental stages. While many manufacturers have voluntarily stopped producing items with BPA, I think this legislation sends a strong message and is an important public safety measure for Maryland's children."