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February 27, 2015

Dear Friend:

We're mid-way through this year's session in Annapolis, and the pace is definitely picking up!

I wanted to mention some of the bills that I've introduced or co-sponsored over the past couple of weeks. They cover a range of topics: renewable energy, animal cruelty, climate change, and retirement savings.



Protecting Dogs from Extreme Weather

We've experienced a lot of frigid temperatures recently, and just as they're unsafe for people, they're also unsafe for pets. Unfortunately, some dog owners leave their dogs tethered outside for too long in cold

weather, so I introduced [House Bill 153](#). This bill prohibits a person from keeping a dog tethered outside when it is very cold, very hot, or during a hazardous weather event. Current law prohibits a person from leaving a dog unattended and tethered in certain circumstances, such as unsanitary conditions or without access to clean water. This bill clarifies unsafe conditions to include: a period longer than 15 minutes when the National Weather Service issues a hazardous weather warning; or a period longer than 1 hour when the local temperature is 32 degrees or below or 100 degrees or above.

Thermal Renewable Energy

On a different issue, I've long been a champion of renewable energy, so I introduced [House Bill 636](#), which would establish incentives for thermal renewable energy sources. This bill would accomplish a number of environmental priorities by

1. incentivizing the building of institutional-scale, wood chip boilers by schools, hospitals, and colleges;
2. incentivizing the building of manure-to-energy systems. Poultry litter pollutes the Chesapeake Bay and these systems would reduce the excess nutrients entering the Bay;
3. encouraging more geothermal systems, providing work for scores of family-owned businesses in Maryland; and
4. encouraging the use of a fuel source that is local and not imported from out of state. Instead of heating oil, thermal plants would use wood chips from forest management, wood waste in urban and suburban areas, and other wood sources.

Climate Change

As someone very concerned about climate change, I also introduced a bill to establish a Commission on Climate Change ([House Bill 514](#)). Climate change is important not just as an environmental issue, but also as an economic issue. The impacts of climate change are apparent all across the state and affect everything from agriculture to transportation. Studies continue to show that average temperatures and annual precipitation are increasing. Maryland's vast shoreline makes it susceptible to coastal erosion and property damage resulting from rising sea levels. This bill will encourage collaboration among all stakeholders in order to provide the Governor and the General Assembly with comprehensive information to guarantee that Maryland's climate change policies are effective and efficient.

Retirement Security

On another issue, I also wanted to report that this week I participated in a press conference announcing the report of the Governor's Task Force to Ensure Retirement Security for All Marylanders, of which I am a member. The report found that *one million Marylanders* have no work-based retirement savings and practically no retirement savings at all. I am one of the legislators sponsoring a bill that would make retirement plans available to private-sector employees who do not have access to a work-based retirement plan ([SB 312/HB 421](#)).

Susan Reimer has an article in the *Baltimore Sun* on this issue at <http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/opinion/oped/bs-ed-reimer-retirement-silver-tsunami-20150301-column.html>.

Legislative Scholarship Reminder

Students living in District 11, who are attending or plan to attend a Maryland College or University, can apply for the H. Allen Lipsitz Memorial Scholarship by going to my website: www.danastein.com.

The deadline for applications is March 27, 2015.

General Assembly Information

If you would like to follow what is going on during Session, the General Assembly website is www.mgaleg.maryland.gov. You can track bills, look up legislation, and listen in on floor and committee hearings.

That's it for now. Please contact me at dana.stein@house.state.md.us or 410-841-3527 if I can be of any assistance or if you would like weigh in on any issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dana Stein". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dana Stein

Delegate

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