



The Senate of Maryland
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401-1991

October 10, 2023

Dear Colleagues:

As you know, last Friday, Senator Melony Griffith announced that she will resign at the end of the month to become chief executive officer of the Maryland Hospital Association. I am profoundly grateful to Senator Griffith for her service as senator and chair of the Finance Committee, but most importantly, for her friendship. Although Senator Griffith's day-to-day presence will be greatly missed in the Senate, I am thrilled for her to begin her next chapter.

The upcoming departure of Senator Griffith creates a vacancy for the chair of the Finance Committee. After seeking input from many, and after careful consideration, I am pleased to announce several appointments that will take effect November 1st. These appointments were determined by taking input from senators and balancing that against several considerations, including ensuring geographic, gender, and racial diversity, maintaining policy expertise, and ensuring stability.

Senator Pamela Beidle will serve as chair of the Finance Committee. Senator Beidle has served in the Maryland General Assembly since 2007 and has consistently been a leader on issues related to insurance and health care. Currently, Senator Beidle serves as chair of the Executive Nominations Committee. Senator Beidle oversaw an unprecedented number of appointments last session, carefully vetting nominees and collaborating with committee members to review the individuals who have put their names forward to serve the people of Maryland. She is a demonstrated consensus builder who is committed to examining issues with an eye towards diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Senator Joanne Benson will become majority whip. Senator Benson has been serving as chair of the Senate Rules Committee since 2019, in the Senate of Maryland since 2011, and in the Maryland General Assembly since 1991. Senator Benson has earned the respect of her colleagues on both sides of the aisle in the Senate of Maryland, serving as the moral compass of the body. She will continue to be a tremendous asset to my leadership team.

Senator Alonzo Washington will move to the Finance Committee, ensuring that Prince George's County will continue to have a critical voice in some of the most impactful policy areas in the State. I have also asked **Senator Michael Jackson** to serve as vice chair of the Senate Democratic Caucus. Senator Jackson understands the needs of all Marylanders as he works with constituents from three different and diverse counties.

Senator Antonio Hayes will serve as chair of the Executive Nominations Committee and **Senator Clarence Lam** will serve as vice chair of the committee. Senator Hayes currently serves as majority whip, vice chair of the Executive Nominations Committee, and vice chair of the Senate Democratic Caucus. Senator Hayes' varied leadership experience in the Senate will be a tremendous asset as the committee

executes one of the most critical functions of the Senate of Maryland. Senator Lam has served on the Executive Nominations Committee since 2019 and has a deep understanding of the committee, as well as a deliberative approach to issues. He will be the first Asian American to serve as chair or vice chair of a standing committee in the Senate of Maryland.

Senator Shelly Hettleman will assume the role of chair of the Rules Committee and **Senator Anthony Muse** will serve as vice chair. Senator Hettleman has served alongside Senator Benson as vice chair of the committee. Senator Hettleman's thoughtfulness will lend itself well to this new position. Senator Muse has 12 years of experience in the Senate, collaborating with members from both chambers. I am confident that his relationships, institutional knowledge, and ability to build consensus among diverse stakeholders will benefit the Senate as he serves in this capacity.

As always, I am honored to continue to lead the Senate of Maryland. I wish you all a productive and restful remainder of the interim.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bill", with a stylized flourish.

William C. Ferguson IV
Senate President

BF/rpa