



2024 Legislative Training for Councils

Prevention and Health Promotion Administration

Office of Support Services

November 2023

Who is this?

Chris McGrath, Health Policy Analyst
Office of Support Services (OSS)

OSS supports Dana and Alex (along with many other Centers, Offices, and Programs) on legislative reports, regulation development, and Legislative Session.

Training Objectives

- Overview of session
- How to read a bill
- Reviewing bills and taking a position
- Updates to hearing procedures, 2024 session

OVERVIEW OF SESSION

What is Legislative Session?

Every year, the Maryland General Assembly (also called “the Legislature”) comes together from mid-January through mid-April to make, change, and remove laws. The short timeline means a fast pace.

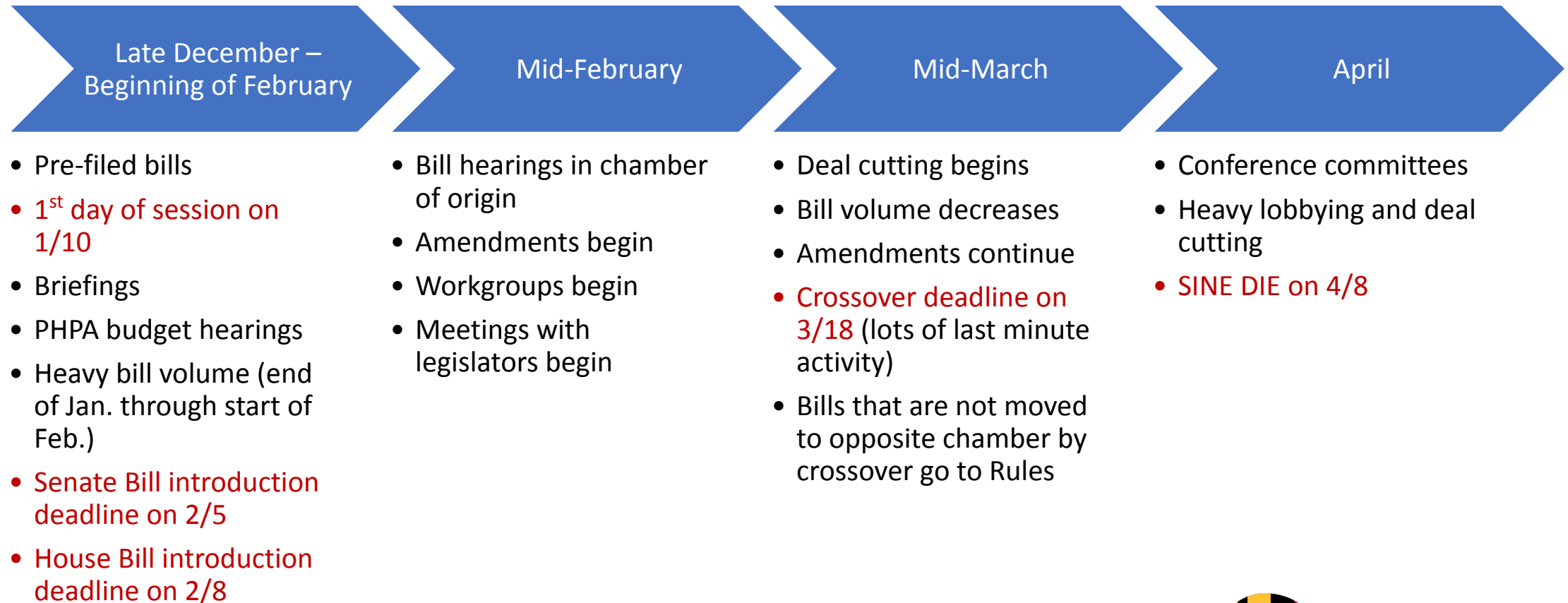
A bill’s (very simplified) lifecycle:

Introduced → Committee → House/Senate vote → Senate/House vote

Key acronyms for Legislative Session

CF	Crossfile
LOI	Letter of Information
LOC	Letter of Concern
LOS	Letter of Support
OSS	PHPA Office of Support Services
PHPA	Prevention and Health Promotion Administration
PHS	Public Health Services
OGA	Office of Governmental Affairs
GAM	General Assembly of Maryland

Legislative Session Timeline



HOW TO READ A BILL

Anatomy of a Bill

First Reader Bill – the bill as printed for the first time with its assigned bill number

Third Reader Bill – the bill that is printed after the second reading in the chamber of origin, including adopted amendments

Both first and third readers have these elements

- Chamber and bill number
- Purpose paragraph
- Affected statutes
- Section I – changes to text
- Section II(+) – Effective date, reporting requirements
- Line numbers

What changed?

Initial Changes:

- [Text in Bold Brackets]: Indicates matter deleted from existing law
- **BOLD TEXT IN SMALL CAPS**: Indicates matter added to existing law

Amendments:

- Underlining: Indicates amendments to the bill in original chamber.
- ~~Strikeout~~: Indicates matter either stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.
- *Italics*: Indicates opposite chamber or conference committee amendments.
- Enrolled copies of legislation are printed with matter added by the opposite house or by a conference committee shown in *italics and underlined*.

By: Delegates Barron, Cullison, Pena-Melnyk, and Rosenberg
Introduced and read first time: January 27, 2017
Assigned to: Health and Government Operations

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 Food Service Facilities – Automated External Defibrillator Program
3 (The Joe Sheya Act)

Purpose Paragraph

4 FOR the purpose of requiring the owner and operator of a certain food service facility to
5 develop and, beginning on a certain date, implement an automated external
6 defibrillator program that meets certain requirements; requiring the Department of
7 Health and Mental Hygiene and the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical
8 Services Systems jointly to adopt certain regulations; and generally relating to an
9 automated external defibrillator program for food service facilities.

Affected Statutes

10 BY adding to
11 Article – Health – General
12 Section 21–330.3
13 Annotated Code of Maryland
14 (2015 Replacement Volume and 2016 Supplement)

Section 1

15 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
16 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

17 Article – Health – General

18 21–330.3.

19 (A) THIS SECTION DOES NOT APPLY TO A FOOD SERVICE FACILITY THAT
20 HAS:

21 (1) AN ANNUAL GROSS INCOME OF \$400,000 OR LESS; OR

22 (2) A SEATING CAPACITY OF LESS THAN 50.

Example – HB 522 (2017)

- First Reader Bill on this slide
- Third Reader Bill on next slide

2

HOUSE BILL 522

1 (B) THE OWNER AND OPERATOR OF A FOOD SERVICE FACILITY SHALL
2 DEVELOP AND, BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2018, IMPLEMENT AN AUTOMATED
3 EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR PROGRAM THAT MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS OF §
4 13–517 OF THE EDUCATION ARTICLE.

5 (C) THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE AND THE
6 MARYLAND INSTITUTE FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES SYSTEMS JOINTLY
7 SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS THAT:

8 (1) ESTABLISH GUIDELINES FOR PERIODIC INSPECTIONS AND
9 ANNUAL MAINTENANCE OF THE AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATORS; AND

10 (2) ASSIST THE OWNER AND OPERATOR OF A FOOD SERVICE FACILITY
11 IN CARRYING OUT THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION.

Section 2

12 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
13 October 1, 2017.

Matter added to existing law. Nothing deleted in this First Reader, but if it were, it would be shown [in brackets].

ROLES DURING SESSION

How it Works: Role of OSS

For PHPA

- Liaison between PHPA and OGA/members of General Assembly
- Track and distribute relevant bills and keeps staff updated on bill status
- Last year PHPA tracked **over 500** bills and reviewed many hundreds more

For Councils:

- OSS distributes bills to PHPA programs
- PHPA programs are responsible for reaching out to their councils to notify them of relevant bills
- **Work with your MDH council staff to determine a system that works for your Council**

REVIEWING BILLS AND TAKING A POSITION

Taking a Position: What's That?

Presents the **Council's** views on a proposed bill in **writing OR** through **writing and in-person testimony**

Position	Translation
No Position	"We have nothing to say"
Letter of Information (LOI)	"We'd like you to know more"
Letter of Support (LOS)	"We're in favor"
Letter of Concern (LOC)	"We have some reservations"
Testimony	Translation
Support with testimony	"We'd like to present our support"
Support with Amendments (SWA)	"We'd like to present our suggestions"
Oppose	"We'd like to present our reservations"

Taking positions: Role of Councils

• Positions:

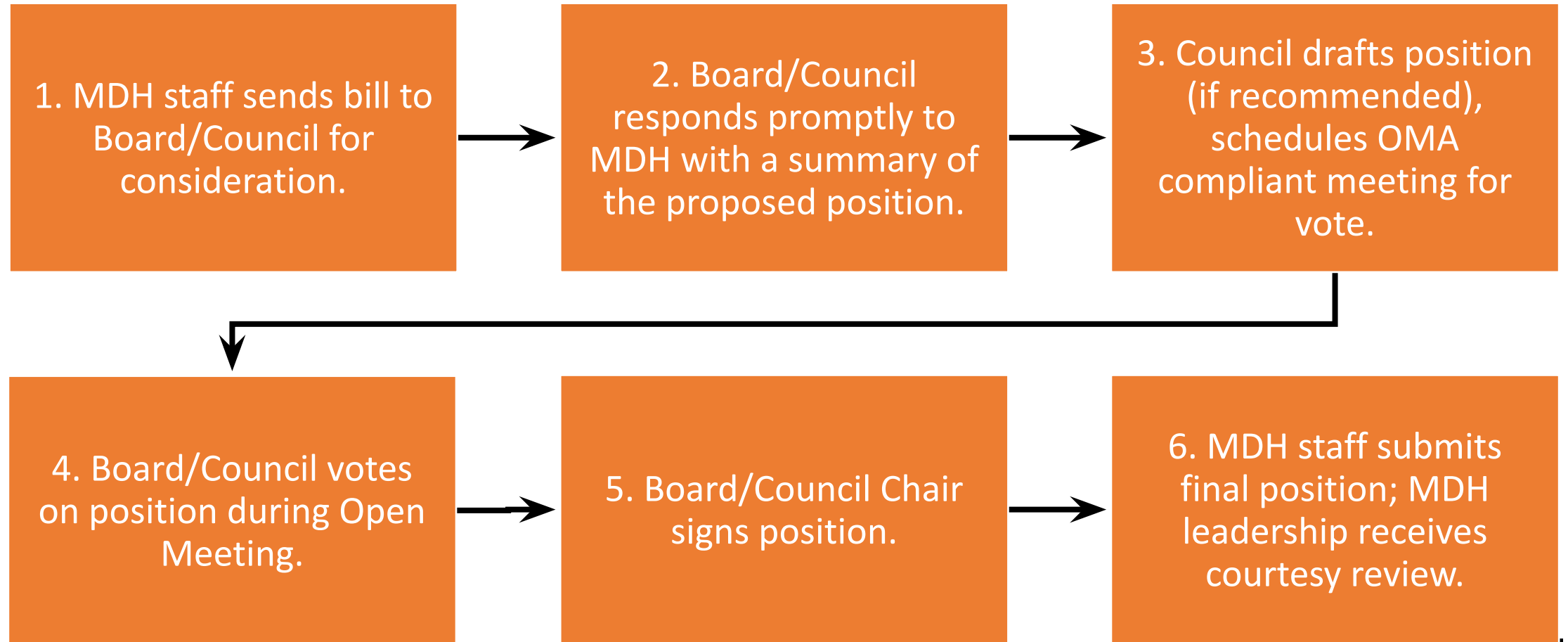
- Review distributed bills and determine if submitting a position
- Write/approve position papers
- Share positions with MDH prior to submission

All while remaining
OMA compliant!

Agenda for vote posted
publicly with **at least**
24 hours notice

**Voting procedures made
available to public**

Typical Council Process for Taking a Position



Recommendations for OMA compliance

Option 1: Notify council members that they should be on standby during session for last-minute meetings

- Potentially identify a quorum of council members willing to commit to schedule modifications to accommodate last minute meetings
- Work with MDH staff member responsible for publicly posting and announcing meetings to ensure a fast turnaround

Option 2: Schedule standing, twice or thrice-weekly calls specifically for potential legislative action that may be posted publicly in advance

- When the bill of interest is released, the MDH staff member responsible for publicly posting and announcing meetings can add that information to the template agenda

Sample “Standing” Session Agenda for Councils

Virginia I. Jones Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Disorders Council
Teleconference regarding 2020 legislative session
3/3/20 3:00pm-3:30pm
Agenda

Call-in:
+1 641-569-8471
Access Code: 169 811 121#

- 1. Introduction 3:00-3:10
 - a. Council chair to review legislative items
 - b. Council staff to take attendance

- 2. Presentation of SB 725 letter of support 3:05-3:10

- 3. Council vote 3:10-3:20
 - a. SB 725 letter of support

- 4. Review of electronic voting 3:20-3:25
 - a. Chair to review electronic voting process
(to conclude at 4PM Tuesday, 4/3)

- 5. Public comment 3:25-3:30

- 6. Adjournment



Testimony procedures: 2024

- Check the MGA website for information about when and where a hearing will be held.
- Most committees allow for both in-person and virtual oral testimony.
- Both chambers and all the committees update their individual hearing/testimony rules yearly and have not released their 2024 rules yet. OSS will send out a cheat sheet once they are released.

PROVIDING TESTIMONY: 2024 PROCEDURES

Help – I have to testify!

How to prepare:

- Practice your testimony in advance and time yourself – you will be cut off.
- Anticipate demanding and specific questions.
- Know the bill's history.
 - Prior introductions are listed on the bill's page on the General Assembly website
- Talk to others who have testified before.
- Know who the legislators on the committee are and if they have specific key issues or constituents.
- Review testimony from previous years.
- Look up voting records for similar bills.
- **Do not repeat written testimony.**

Help – I *want* to testify!

“I am going to provide testimony, but am going to do it on behalf of another institution or simply on behalf of myself—can I identify myself as a Council Member?”

- Short answer: yes, but with caveats.
- Longer answer: yes, but you must clarify that you are not speaking on behalf of the Council, and that you are instead representing [other institution/yourself/other constituents/etc.].

GAM Website

- <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov>
- Bill text and status
- DLS fiscal and policy notes
- New legislation by day
- Committee hearings – live and recorded
- Committee schedule and membership
- Video tutorials

Contact Information

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Questions?

<https://phpa.health.Maryland.gov>