



With the March 21st Crossover date approaching, the floor activity in both the Senate and House of Delegates has intensified as Legislators continue their deliberations over the 2,491 bills introduced thus far during the 2022 Maryland General Assembly Legislative Session. Any bills passed in their originating chamber after this date will be referred to the opposite chamber's Rules Committee prior to their introduction.

Earlier this week, the House of Delegates voted unanimously to pass HB 400 *Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Hiring and Promotion Preferences – Veterans and Their Spouses PG/MC 106-22*. This bill repeals the current statute pertaining to the WSSC Water competitive selection process for appointments of veterans and adopts the processes utilized by the State of Maryland. The bill is now before the Senate for consideration and has been assigned to the Finance Committee.

WSSC Water's **Intergovernmental Relations Office (IRO)** advocates for legislation that helps WSSC Water fulfill our mission to provide safe and reliable water, life's most precious resource, and return clean water to our environment, all in an ethical, sustainable, and financially responsible manner.

The Annapolis Observer is IRO's weekly update on happenings in Annapolis and provides updates on key bills of interest to WSSC Water.

Legislative Updates

Please find below the status of the three WSSC Water sponsored bills:

[HB 399](#) *Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Minority Business Enterprise Utilization Program – Termination Extension*, extends the statutory authority for the WSSC Minority Business Enterprise Utilization (MBE) Program for a period of one year ending on June 30, 2023. On February 24th, the bill was passed by the House of Delegates by a vote of 131-2. The bill has moved to the Senate for consideration, where it has been assigned to the Budget and Taxation Committee. The Senate bill hearing has not been scheduled as of the date of this report.

[HB 400](#) *Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Hiring and Promotion Preferences – Veterans and Their Spouses*, repeals the current statute pertaining to the WSSC Water competitive selection process for appointments of veterans and adopts the processes utilized by the State of Maryland. The House of Delegates voted unanimously to pass HB 400 on March 9th. The bill moves over to the Senate for consideration and will be assigned to the Finance Committee. The Senate bill hearing has not been scheduled as of the date of this report.

[HB 526](#) *Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Plumbing and Fuel Gas Services – Licenses and Penalties, Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Plumbing and Fuel Gas Services – Licenses and Penalties PG/MC 109-22*, authorizes WSSC Water, in addition to other penalties, to impose a penalty not exceeding \$5,000 for each violation to persons who violate provisions of the WSSC Plumbing and Fuel Gas Code or State Law. The bill has unanimously passed out of the House Delegations of Montgomery and Prince George's counties. The House Economic Matters Committee held their bill hearing for HB 526 on 2/22/2022.

Around WSSC Water

WSSC Water Selects Jon T. Rymer as New Inspector General

On March 10, 2022, WSSC Water Commissioners announced the selection of Jon T. Rymer as WSSC Water's second Inspector General. Mr. Rymer brings almost a decade of experience as an Inspector General in the Federal government, more than seven years as a director at a Big Four accounting firm, and over 15 years in the banking industry. He has been a U.S. Senate-confirmed and presidentially-appointed Inspector General for both the Obama and Bush administrations. He will join the Commission on April 4, 2022.

Mr. Rymer was the Inspector General for the U.S. Department of Defense, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), and the Interim Inspector General for the Securities and Exchange Commission.

WSSC Water's OIG was enacted under Chapter 130, Laws of Maryland 2018 (Maryland General Assembly, House Bill 419). The Inspector General, which operates independently from WSSC Water management and reports directly to the WSSC Water Board of Commissioners, is responsible for conducting, supervising and coordinating audits, investigations and reviews of the utility's operations.

WSSC Water March Commission Meeting

The monthly Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 16, 2022 starting at 10 a.m. Access the link and agenda [here](#).

The [meeting will be virtual](#); however, interested stakeholders can provide input during the public comment portion of the meeting by calling 240.800.7929/Conference ID: 652 141 809#. The public comment period will start shortly after 10 a.m.

WSSC Water Events

WSSC Water hosts a variety of events and meetings and participates in your community. To stay updated on issues that impact your daily life, your business and your neighborhood, to review proceedings of the latest official meetings, or to join us at an upcoming event, please visit wsscwater.com/events.

One Water Regional Art Contest – Deadline Is Friday, March 18th!

Only a few days are left to enter the One Water Regional Contest! All high school-aged artists are encouraged to help WSSC Water highlight the importance of protecting our source water by submitting artwork focused on one or all of the following themes:

- The connection between human actions on land impacting water quality
- A community's connection to local waterways – in terms of drinking water sources as well as places for recreation and enjoyment
- The role of water utilities to protect our sources of water through environmental stewardship and responsible wastewater treatment

One grand prize winner in each category will receive \$100 in April. The two winners will have their work entered in a regional contest with other Washington, D.C. metro-area water and wastewater utilities. Submissions are due March 18, 2022. For complete details please visit wsscwater.com/artcontest.

Customer Assistance and the Water Fund

Sadly, approximately one in five customers is past due on their bills. WSSC Water remains

committed to making water and sewer bills more affordable by offering financial assistance programs. We want to help customers avoid a water service turnoff and ensure our safe, clean water continues to flow to your tap. Learn more at [WSSC Water's Customer Assistance Programs](#).

You may also help by making a tax-deductible donation to the Water Fund to help more neighbors have access to clean, safe water. Since 1994, the fund has helped nearly 20,000 people throughout Montgomery and Prince George's counties. The Water Fund is administered by The Salvation Army. Every dollar of your donation goes directly to local families who need financial assistance paying their water/sewer bills. Click [here](#) to learn more and donate online.

Customer Advocates

Our Customer Advocates are in your communities every day, carrying out their mission to serve as liaisons between you and WSSC Water, and ensuring that we are providing a high level of customer service.

Northern Prince George's County (areas north of Central Avenue, MD 214)

David Wilkins

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301-648-6953

Southern Prince George's County (areas south of Central Avenue, MD 214)

Stephen Billingsley

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Montgomery County

Brandon Stewart

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301-642-1712

Find your Customer Advocate [here](#).

Calendar

- March 15, 2022 – Committee Reporting Courtesy Date
- March 21, 2022 – Crossover
- April 3, 2022 – Budget bill to be passed by both Chambers
- April 11, 2022 – Sine Die

Related Links

[Maryland General Assembly](#)

- [Session Calendar \(PDF\)](#)
- [Track Legislation](#)

[Montgomery County Delegation](#)

[Prince George's County Delegation](#)

[Maryland Association of Counties](#)

[Maryland Municipal League](#)

About IRO

WSSC Water's **Intergovernmental Relations Office (IRO)** team works to promote the *value of water* and the *value of WSSC Water*; engage *federal, state, county and local government* and elected stakeholders and advocate for WSSC Water's strategic interests

and priorities, and foster *relationships* with organizations and promote collaborative interests.

In Annapolis, the IRO team works with members to support administratively and fiscally responsible legislation, in addition to championing policy that benefits all water utilities throughout Maryland. WSSC Water is committed to increased statewide investment in water and wastewater infrastructure and sound regulatory initiatives.

Meet the IRO Team

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Please click [here](#) for a printable sheet of our key contacts.



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For over 100 years, WSSC Water has proudly served the citizens of Prince George's and Montgomery counties – providing drinking water that has always met strict Safe Drinking Water Act standards and protecting the environment through vital water resource recovery services. Our vision is to be THE world-class water utility, where excellent products and services are always on tap. www.wsscwater.com