

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

—  
ASSISTANT MINORITY WHIP

—  
Chair, Talbot County Delegation

—  
Economic Matters Committee

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Joint Committee on Federal Relations



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## Legislative Wrap Up February 5, 2010

### *Haddaway Escorts Senate to State of the State Address*

The Governor delivered his annual State of the State Address this week in the House Chamber. It is customary for the Senate to visit the House Chamber for the duration of the speech. Delegate Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio and Delegate Bill Frick were selected for the second year in a row to escort the Senate into the House Chambers. Article II, Section 19 of Maryland's Constitution requires the Governor to ". . . inform the Legislature of the condition of the State and recommend to their consideration such measures as he may judge necessary and expedient." As such, the Governor's address included details on his budget and an overview of his legislative initiatives for the year.

### *Septic System Upgrades*

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) is the lead agency for the Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund program which provides financial assistance for waste water treatment and septic system upgrades. There are twelve contractors approved in the State to perform septic system upgrades and many Maryland residents have chosen to participate in the program. Unfortunately, MDE has been paying the homeowner instead of the contractor (on average \$12,000-\$14,000). Some homeowners have been keeping the money instead of turning it over to the contractor. One Eastern Shore business was owed nearly \$2 million. Since March, Delegate Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio, Delegate Addie Eckardt and Senator Richard Colburn have attempted to get MDE to change their policy. Due to a lack of response from the Department, Delegate Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio sponsored House Bill 36, which would require MDE to pay the contractor directly once the homeowner, the health department and the Department approved that the work had been completed satisfactorily. Senator Richard Colburn sponsored legislation in the Senate. Delegates Addie Eckardt, Michael Smigiel and Wayne Norman were cosponsors. A hearing was held on the bill Wednesday in the House Environmental Matters Committee where MDE finally conceded to change their policy. With that in mind, the bill will be withdrawn and MDE will implement their new policy immediately.

### ***Credit Card Blacklisting Prevention Act***

Delegate Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio and other members of the House Economic Matters Committee held a hearing on a bill that would prevent credit card companies from blacklisting customers. Blacklisting is a practice by which certain credit card companies use “risk factors” to change the terms and conditions of their contracts with customers. Customers have been penalized simply for shopping at certain stores or for having a home mortgage held by a certain company. This discriminatory practice can mean accelerated payments, increased interest rates or reduced credit limits for consumers even if they are good customers with good credit. A similar bill was introduced last year and passed in the House of Delegates, but failed for lack of action in the Senate. Delegate Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio voted in favor of the legislation.

### ***Heritage Tax Credit and the Sustainable Communities Act of 2010***

Delegate Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio has cosponsored legislation with the Governor that will re-establish the Maryland Heritage Tax Credit and encourage infill and redevelopment of downtown areas. The Maryland Heritage Tax Credit has been a widely successful program helping both commercial and residential property owners restore buildings and has been an important economic development tool, including rural communities on the Eastern Shore. The legislation entitled the Sustainable Communities Act of 2010 will be heard in the House Ways and Means Committee.