

CHECK INSIDE
FOR UPCOMING
EVENTS IN 2016.



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M.C.
PRSRT STD

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4th Congressional District
Maryland

A legislative update

from the office of
Congresswoman Donna F. Edwards

for Maryland's 4th Congressional District



Legislative Highlights

Transportation

America's infrastructure is falling apart. The United States now ranks just 16th in infrastructure investment in the world, and the American Society of Civil Engineers gives our nation's infrastructure a D-plus grade.

Appointed by Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi to the conference committee to negotiate the final legislation, I was proud to work on and support the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act). This bipartisan, bicameral, long-term reauthorization will fund highway, transit, highway safety, motor carrier safety, hazardous materials safety, and even passenger rail programs and projects. The FAST Act will help create high-wage, middle-class jobs, improve the nation's aging infrastructure, and boost the economy. This 5-year authorization will also provide state and local governments in Maryland and across the country with the necessary certainty to undertake large-scale, complex transportation projects for the first time in years.

I championed several provisions in the final transportation reauthorization, including:



Rep. Edwards speaks with a parent about the college admissions process and what programs the federal government can provide.

High Density States Funding: Working with several Members, we restored funding for the High Density States program, which will specifically help Maryland and six other states. The program will allow transit, and particularly bus systems, to maintain jobs, service, and service frequency, helping those who most rely on public transportation.

Stormwater Mitigation Language:

I included guidance in the conference report pertaining to stormwater mitigation to help protect the environment, improve water quality, and reduce costs of transportation projects.

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD):

My amendment increases TOD opportunities by making TOD projects eligible for funding through the federal Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA), and lowers the \$50 million threshold that TIFIA currently requires. This will help provide an economic catalyst around metro stations in Prince George's County and throughout the region.

Increased Bus Funding:

The FAST Act injects a total of \$3.7 billion over five years into the bus program, which will help alleviate traffic and provide local agencies with the money they need to buy additional buses and expand operations to better connect communities.

WMATA Oversight

As part of the FAST Act, I worked in a bipartisan effort with Reps. Norton (DC) and Comstock (VA-10) to provide new and direct federal oversight, investigation, and enforcement authority of Metro. I also teamed up with Rep. Comstock to transfer Metro board appointments from the General Services Administration to the U.S. Department of Transportation, which will improve accountability.

Omnibus Spending Bill

Late in December, the FY 2016 Omnibus Appropriations bill was passed, which will keep the federal government funded through September 2016. It was a bipartisan compromise, and was therefore far from perfect. However, it accomplished several important tasks for Maryland and the American people, while including almost no horrendous new policy riders. Namely, the measure avoids another disastrous government shutdown right before the holidays, makes vital investments for working

families, ensures federal employees receive a long-overdue pay increase, and provides critical funding for numerous projects, including \$390 million for a consolidated FBI Headquarters, \$150 million for WMATA Metro, and \$100 million for the Purple Line. I also cosponsored efforts included in the bill to reauthorize the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act, and to delay the so-called "Cadillac" tax, a tax on employer-provided health plans – from 2018 to 2020.

Prescription Drugs

I joined with Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi and fellow co-chair of the Steering and Policy Committee Rep. Rosa DeLauro (CT-3) to lead a discussion on prescription drug affordability, titled "Ensuring Access and Affordability of Prescription Drugs, While Spurring Innovation." We heard expert witnesses who highlighted the severity of prescription drug costs and the impact these costs are having on Americans.



Rep. Edwards holds a press conference with Sen. Mikulski, Sen. Cardin, Rep. Hoyer, and County Executive Baker to announce \$390 million in funding for a consolidated FBI Headquarters.

Constituent Success Stories

My office is here to assist you with a variety of federal constituent services. Below are just some of the federal issues my office can help with. Please visit my website for a full list. While each case is different and I cannot guarantee a positive outcome, here are some of the success stories constituents have shared.

- a. Housing
- b. Immigration and Citizenship
- c. Internal Revenue
- d. Justice
- e. Labor
- f. Military
- g. Passports and Visa
- h. Postal Service
- i. Social Security
- j. Veterans



Rep. Edwards with Captain Alea Nadeem after discussing veterans issues at the Veterans History Project reception.

"I filed an I-130 petition for my wife and son in March 2014. It was well over a year since I last heard from the National Visa Center on an interview date for my wife and son to be issued a visa. Unfortunately, I have already lost time with my 2-year old son and was almost ready to leave the U.S. to go back to Nigeria so I could be reunited with my family. However, after contacting Congresswoman Edwards' office for assistance, it was finally found that there was a technical error in the system that did not update my file. I received an appointment date at the Nigerian Embassy and am ecstatic that I am finally a step closer to being with my family."



– Eburnola Oladeji, Laurel

"I was wounded in the line of duty while serving in the Army. For six years, I tried to sort out my disability claim through the Veterans Administration (VA), without success. Frustrated and not sure what other actions I should take, I asked Congresswoman Edwards for help. Her office contacted the VA on my behalf, and after receiving assistance, I was granted 100% disability. I even received a retroactive payment."

– Donald Washington, Bowie

2014/2015 Casework Summary

	2014	2015*
Total constituent requests for assistance	762	526
Total Cases Closed	974	656
\$ Recovered or Saved	\$2,408,867	\$3,027,828.52

*as of December 23, 2015

OPM Data Breach Information

Notification letters are being delivered over a 12-week period by the U.S. Postal Service to those who have been impacted. If you do not receive a letter and believe you have been impacted, you can contact the verification center by calling (866) 408-4555 or visiting www.opm.gov/cybersecurity. The FY2016 omnibus spending package also included \$5,000,000 in identity theft insurance that will be provided for 10 years.

Sign Up Now as Congressional Blackout Period Begins January 27, 2016

The Franking Blackout Rule states: "a Member may not send mass mailings during the 90 days immediately preceding the date of any election." The cutoff date for Maryland is January 27, 2016, for the election on April 26, 2016. Be sure to receive legislative updates and information on upcoming events by signing up for my e-newsletter at www.donnaedwards.house.gov.

Office Locations

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Look for Congresswoman Edwards on YouTube, Facebook, & Twitter!

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Donna's Community Events

COLLEGE & CAREER FAIR

On October 10, 2015, I held my 7th Annual College & Career Fair at Annapolis High School. Over 1,500 students and parents connected with representatives from colleges and universities, government agencies, career training institutions, testing centers, and military services. Many participated in one or



Rep. Edwards with students and parents at the College and Career Fair after discussing the importance of preparing early for college admissions and federal scholarships.

more workshops on topics including the college application process, financial aid, and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). More than thirty students were excited to be admitted to one of the colleges on the spot!

JOB FAIR

In September, nearly 1,000 job seekers spoke to nearly 100 local and national employers. Employers shared the hard truths

about job seeking and job skills. Potential candidates completed job applications, distributed resumes, landed interviews, and received job offers. They networked and gained valuable tips on how to find jobs, training opportunities, and apprenticeships in fields of their interest and beyond.

VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT

In November, I was honored, once again, to host the Veterans History Project. An intergenerational project, students and other volunteers from Prince George's Community College, University of Maryland College Park, Suitland High School, Northeast High School, Charles Herbert Flowers High School, and Kettering Middle School helped interview and/or video graph 30 veterans for the project. Volunteers recorded veterans who left their families behind to serve in every war to protect the homeland, our overseas neighbors, U.S. Presidents, and even the Queen of England.

“A few years ago, I attended the job fair in Landover, Md. I had been unemployed for almost 3 years when this job fair changed my life. Congresswoman Edwards held another job fair on September 9th, which I attended as a rep for my company to try to hire the next success stories like mine!”

— Antonio Collins



2016 Events

As you can see, we had several successful events to close out 2015. With 2016 being an election year, I won't be able to send you information for upcoming events. That's why I wanted to share the details for several signature events with you now so you can mark your calendars. For additional information on upcoming events, sign up for my e-newsletter at www.donnaedwards.house.gov.

DATE	EVENT	PROPOSED OR CONFIRMED LOCATION
Thursday JANUARY 21 10:00 am – 11:30 am	Roundtable on Lending Issues	Largo-Kettering Library 9601 Capital Lane, Upper Marlboro, MD 20774
Tuesday JANUARY 26 9:00 am – 10:30 am	Roundtable on Environmental Issues	Anne Arundel Community College CADE 101 College Parkway, Arnold, MD 21012
Tuesday FEBRUARY 23 8:30 am – 11:30 am	Small Business Forum: Financing Options to Grow and Sustain Your Enterprise	Hillcrest Heights Community Center 2300 Oxon Run Drive, Temple Hills, MD 20748
Friday MARCH 11 10:00 am – 11:30 am	Roundtable on Women's Health Issues	Prince George's County Government Building 1st Floor Conference Room 1820 McCormick Drive, Suite 104, Largo, MD 20774
Tuesday JUNE 28 8:30 am – 1:00 pm	Nonprofit Forum	Charles Herbert Flowers High School 10001 Ardwick Ardmore Road, Springdale, MD 20774
Saturday OCTOBER 15 8:30 am – 1:00 pm	College and Career Fair & Forum	Oxon Hill High School 6701 Leyte Drive, Oxon Hill, MD 20745

7th Annual STEM Forum will take place in the spring of 2016. More details to come.