



News Release

Maryland Board of Public Works Approves \$426 Million in State Spending

Board approves investments in communities across Maryland

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (October 7, 2026) — Comptroller **Brooke E. Lierman** today joined Lieutenant Governor Aruna Miller and Treasurer Dereck Davis for a meeting of the Board of Public Works. Overall, the Board approved 121 items, representing a total State expenditure of \$426,150,541.59.

Among the approved items was the compensation rate set by the Attorney General for Special Counsel to defend Governor Moore in *David D. Smith v. Wes Moore*.

Comptroller Lierman provided the following statement on this item:

“This item has received a lot of attention, so I just want to be clear what we are voting on.

“This item sets the rate for outside counsel to assist the Attorney General's office. It's capped at \$50,000 for the first phase, which is the motion to dismiss, which has already been filed and which I have read.

“If that motion succeeds, which I think it probably will, that's where the cost ends. Now, I just want to be clear that the state is covering this representation because the law says that when a public employee is sued in the course of performing their official duties, the state will defend them.

“And that holds for a state trooper, park ranger, professor, and for a governor. And courts across the nation have agreed that speaking to the press about matters of public interest is well within a public official's job.

“So when Governor Moore goes on the TV networks, he is speaking to the people of Maryland, and he is speaking as our Governor, elected by 1.3 million voters. And these laws, and that is the reason that it's important that we vociferously defend the Governor in this case, is because we believe in protecting free speech and the free speech of our public officials.

“We don't want a country, I certainly don't want a country, where anyone with a big legal budget can sue a public servant into silence or can even chill public servants' speech. I don't want a country where you cannot speak your mind, even when powerful people in corporations disagree. In this country, the answer to speech that you don't like has always been more speech, not enforced silence. Again, it's best that disagreement can drive constructive debate, and that constructive debate, offered in good faith, can drive progress.

“That is what representative democracy is, it is how we all progress. And that's how we protect our state and a nation where all of us can speak up and share our ideas without fear of legal retribution.

“So at a time when I see our First Amendment rights across the nation under threat, and even the press being silenced, I'm confident that the courts will uphold those values, and I am looking forward to ensuring that our Governor, as any public official should have, that we will vociferously defend his right to speak on behalf of Marylanders, and I look forward to voting yes on this item.”

The Board approved grant agreements for 48 projects across the state, with a total value of \$20,964,000.

Some notable approved grant agreements included:

- \$3.0 million to the Kennedy Krieger Institute for the construction of a 10-story, 228,000 sq. ft. facility for specialty pediatric healthcare in Baltimore City.
- \$1.625 million to the Friends of Patapsco Valley State Park for property improvements across the park.
- \$1.5 million to the National Aquarium in Baltimore City for critical infrastructure improvements.
- \$1.025 million to the City of Glenarden in Prince George's County for planning and design work toward a new public safety building.
- \$977,000 to Housing Unlimited Inc. for the acquisition of independent affordable housing units in Montgomery County for low-income adults with mental illness.

[Access documents and a list of all approved items from today's meeting.](#)

[Watch a recording of today's meeting.](#)

The next Board of Public Works meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 28, 2026

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