

Memorandum

To: [District 32 Republican Club](#)

Re: Legislation & Politics

From: Chuck Serio, Legislative Committee Chairman

Date: May 1, 2018



Federal

HR 644 – Conscience Protection Act

Representative Diane Black (R-TN-6) introduced this bill on January 24, 2017. According to the Congressional Research Service, “This bill amends the Public Health Service Act to codify the prohibition against the federal government and state and local governments that receive federal financial assistance for health-related activities penalizing or discriminating against a health care provider based on the provider's refusal to be involved in, or provide coverage for, abortion.” The bill has 135 Republican cosponsors and 2 Democrat cosponsors. Congressman **Andy Harris (R-MD-1)** is the only cosponsor from Maryland. It was referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce which has taken no action.

Presidential Nomination – Stuart Kyle Duncan to Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals

Duncan was confirmed by the Senate on April 24 by a vote of [\(50-47\)](#). He is President Trump’s 15th circuit court nominee to be confirmed.¹ In spite of the fact that Duncan, who was a law professor at the University of Mississippi and has argued more than 30 cases in federal appellate court and two before the U.S. Supreme Court, only one Democrat voted for confirmation. That was Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV).² Senator Manchin has apparently noticed that Donald Trump won West Virginia by a double-digit margin. The Democrat Party’s only policy seems to be resistance to the outcome of the 2016 election.

S 2525 – First Amendment Defense Act

Senator Mike Lee (R-UT) introduced this bill on March 8, 2018 to ensure that the federal government will take no discriminatory action against a person who speaks or acts in accordance with their moral conviction that marriage is a union of one man and one woman or that sexual relations outside marriage are improper. It has 22 Republican cosponsors and no Democrat cosponsors. It is now being considered by the Senate Judiciary Committee.

¹ Tiffany Bates / Elizabeth Slattery, *The Daily Signal*, April 24, 2018

² Ibid.

Maryland General Assembly

HB 1302 – Extreme Risk Protective Orders (Red Flag)

Analysis:

This bill establishes an “extreme risk prevention order” and sets forth a process by which a petitioner may seek a court order to prevent a respondent from possessing a firearm for the duration of the order under specified conditions. A petitioner includes specified health professionals, a law enforcement officer, or any other interested person.³

HB 1302 was introduced by Delegate Valentino-Smith, Democrat from Prince George’s County, and cosponsored by Delegate Beidle (D-32). The National Rifle Association is opposed to these laws because it allows courts to infringe on Second Amendment rights without the level of evidence required for criminal proceedings.⁴ The House of Delegates voted [\(116-17\)](#) to pass it. District 32 Delegates Beidle, Chang and Sophocleus voted in support of the bill. The Maryland Senate followed suit on April 6 and voted [\(31-13\)](#) to approve the bill. **Senator DeGrange (D-32)** voted in favor of the bill. Governor Hogan has approved the bill.

SB 677 – Union Access to New Employee Program (Update)

At the time of [last month’s report](#), neither chamber had voted on the Senate version of the bill.

Analysis:

This bill requires the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), the University System of Maryland system institutions (USM), Morgan State University (MSU), St. Mary’s College of Maryland (SMCM), and Baltimore City Community College (BCCC) to provide specified employee information in a searchable and analyzable electronic format to an exclusive representative within 30 days of a new employee’s hire and as specified in the bill. It repeals the right of employees to opt out of the release of their personal information to an exclusive representative and expands the personal information that must be provided; it also requires that an exclusive representative be allowed to meet with a new employee in the relevant bargaining unit.

The Senate approved the bill on March 26 by voting [\(33-14\)](#). Senator DeGrange (D-32) was among those voting in the affirmative. The House followed suit on March 30, voting [\(88-48\)](#) to pass it. District 32 Delegates **Beidle, Chang and Sophocleus** voted yes on the bill.

SB 1028 – Conversion Therapy Ban for Minors (Update)

At the time of [last month’s report](#), the House had not voted. On April 4, the House approved the bill [\(95-27\)](#). District 32 Delegates **Beidle, Chang and Sophocleus** all voted for the bill. **Governor Hogan** has pledged to sign it.⁵

³ Department of Legislative Services

⁴ WJZ/Associated Press, February 27, 2018

⁵ Nico Lang, INTO, April 20, 2018