

# DELAWARE LIVE

OUR STATE. OUR NEWS. OUR HOME.

 Delaware Live

 @DelawareLive

[SUBSCRIBE](#)

June 25, 2023

Vol. 4, Issue 25





# CONTENTS

photo link: Delaware Greenways

|                      |    |
|----------------------|----|
| Headlines .....      | 3  |
| Culture .....        | 9  |
| Business .....       | 13 |
| Food & Dining .....  | 15 |
| Government.....      | 17 |
| Education.....       | 25 |
| Sports .....         | 28 |
| Stay Connected ..... | 30 |



State 2024 Budget Jumps 10%



Bill to Curb Agressive Medical Debt Collection



Former Blue Hen Makes Major League Debut





photo link: Marcia Reed

MILFORD'S

# JUNETEENTH

CELEBRATING CULTURE and FREEDOM



# Headlines

**DELAWARE**  
**LIVE**  
 OUR STATE. OUR NEWS. OUR HOME.





# STATE'S 2024 BUDGET OF \$5.6 BILLION JUMPS 10% OVER 2023

BY SAM HAUT

A 2024 state budget that's 10% higher than 2023's led eight Republicans to vote against it Thursday in the House of Representatives, but that didn't stop it from passing. [House Bill 195](#), sponsored by Rep. William Carson, D-Smyrna, delineated how the \$5.6 billion budget will be spent over the next fiscal year, which starts July 1. Carson is the vice chairman of the Joint Finance Committee, which hammers out the budget.

It's about a \$600 million increase from the [previous year's budget](#), partly because of millions that had to be devoted to Medicaid and retiree healthcare.

Rep. Lyndon Yearick, R-Camden, announced he would not vote for the bill because of that increase. He thanked the committee for their work in trying circumstances.

"That 10% is now baked in," said Yearick, who is also the House minority whip. "If we look at inflation 4%, 5%, 8% and look at it compared to the state of our economy growing, I don't think we're growing that fast."

Yearick said he's not advocating against something specific, such as increases to teacher pay or additional increases to any department.

"However, I do rise with concern that that level of an increase is not only going to make the next year's budget harder, but the following year and the following year."

Fellow Republican Ruth Briggs King, R-Georgetown, a member of the Joint Finance Committee, said the larger than usual increase was due to inflation.

"I think this is one of the largest increases we've ever had," Briggs King said. "And people are going to look back and they're gonna say that's almost a 10% increase. And I'm going to say yes, but when we're facing unprecedented inflation that we have 8% or more, the state has to keep pace with that inflation."

The budget passed 32 to 8. It now heads to the Senate for consideration.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

**JOHN MOLLURA**  
- PHOTOGRAPHY -  
BEAUTY PORTRAITS - HEAD SHOTS  
- FAMILIES -  
302.222.6308



**Stronger together**

Young >> Survivors In Action  
*#MovingForward*

**Learn More >>**

**db** DELAWARE BREAST CANCER COALITION





## REPUBLICANS MAKE ONE MORE TRY TO LIMIT DNREC ON EV MANDATE

BY SAM HAUT

The leader of the House Republicans offered a resolution during Thursday's session asking DNREC to pause the implementation of California's Advanced Clean Car II regulation. Like other Republican attempts to rein in state efforts to increase the number of electric vehicles on the road, the motion failed 17 to 22.

The resolution also would have ask the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control to publish a report on the impact that the regulation would have in Delaware and how it has impacted the 33 other states that have implemented it.

Rep. Mike Ramone, R-Pike Creek, who is also House minority leader, said he put forward the resolution to show his constituents that he tried.

Republicans are the most vocal in trying to stop or limit DNREC's implementation of regulations pushing the sales of electric vehicles until new gas-power vehicle sales are phased out in 2035. DNREC is doing that in

response to an executive order from Gov. John Carney, following the lead of other blue states. Opponents say the order doesn't take into account the much higher cost of electric vehicles, the lack of charging stations, the effect on the country's electric grid, the need for higher mileage cars in more rural areas, and more.

"If they don't vote it out, then at least I can go to the people that I represent and say I've done everything possible to try to help," Ramone said. "Your voice, since you voted for me, was heard, and we weren't successful and I'm sorry, but we'll try harder next time."

Two bills, [House Bill 123](#), sponsored by Ramone and introduced on April 20, and [Senate Bill 96](#), sponsored by Sen. Brian Pettyjohn, R-Georgetown and introduced on April 19, each would restrict DNREC's ability to implement the proposed regulation.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

# Why? Choose?

Del-One Federal Credit Union

Helping members reach their goals since 1960



www.Del-One.org | (302) 739-4496







# AFTER SIX MONTH SEARCH, LEARNING COLLAB SELECTS EXEC. DIRECTOR

Repeated efforts to contact Burgos for comment were unsuccessful. She laid out her goals and plans for her first 90 days as executive director at a recent [town hall](#).

Burgos most recently served as an education researcher, co-designing research projects and partnering with the educational-technological community across the country. Burgos, a Wilmington resident, was also the director of [Youth Invest Partners](#), leading multi-year investments in initiatives focused on improving education and health outcomes for marginalized communities.

The [Wilmington Learning Collaborative](#) is a state agency created in November 2022 that aims to improve the educational and societal outcomes for children in nine city elementary schools across Brandywine, Red Clay and Christina school districts. The Learning Collaborative is currently in its planning year and hopes to launch in the fall. However, the governing council voted to go to the boards of all three districts in July to request an extension of the planning year, largely because it took six months to fill the executive director position.

Representatives this month will ask district boards to amend the signed [memorandum of understanding](#) to give the council more time to act. Delays in conducting a needs and root-cause assessment at schools has also put the group behind schedule.

The Collaborative's main goal is to empower city families by addressing societal problems and inequities while focusing on improving student achievement.

As executive director, Burgos will oversee the 15-person governing council's business and affairs and administer the budget and relay financial information to the treasurer. She'll be able to discuss and introduce initiatives, but will not have voting power.

The job description for its executive director position cites an annual salary of \$156,257 to \$175,616. Councilman Lincoln Hohler, superintendent of Brandywine, said the council is now negotiating salary and benefits with Burgos.

The other council members voted to elect Burgos at a meeting Friday. A recording of the meeting has not yet been posted, but is expected to be this week.

The governing council's next meeting is June 29 at 6 p.m. Watch it [HERE](#).



BY JAREK RUTZ

The Wilmington Learning Collaborative has finally selected an executive director. After a nationwide search that lasted more than six months, the board on Friday chose Laura Burgos, a career educator in the public, nonprofit and private sectors.

"The WLC continues to establish itself as a non-profit corporate entity, and it is very important work," said Dan Shelton, a member of the governing council and superintendent of Christina School District. Those involved with the collaborative are very passionate about ensuring they get this right for the students in the city of Wilmington, he said.

"Dr. Burgos has the experience and expertise to lead us in the right direction and get the real work of ensuring the right systems and supports are in place to improve outcomes for our students," he said.



# REPUBLICAN BILL WOULD ALLOW BAIL DENIAL FOR FIREARM OFFENSES

BY SAM HAUT

A Republican representative plans to file a bill that would allow bail to be denied to anyone who is carrying a firearm when arrested for committing a felony. Delaware’s Constitution allows people charged with capital offenses to be held without bail when “proof is positive or the presumption great,” which the bill would expand to include people charged with the possession of a firearm during the commission of a felony.

Rep. Danny Short, R-Seaford, said in a release that having a firearm means someone is willing to use violence.

“Anyone who chooses to carry a firearm while committing major criminal acts is demonstrating a calculated willingness to use violence against others,” Short said. “Unlike many of the firearms-related bills introduced in the General Assembly in recent years, this proposal targets the individuals who are actually perpetrating gun crimes.”

Short said he doesn’t expect his bill to be heard this year because this year’s session is almost over. He hopes

it will start a discussion to bring the bill up at the beginning of next year’s session.

The release cites a **report** by the Criminal Justice Council Statistical Analysis Center that says of the 158 people suspected of being involved with a Delaware shooting in 2020, 149 had an arrest history in Delaware and 115 had been arrested for a violent felony arrest. Of that 115, 49 had been arrested for one or two violent felony arrests, and 66 had been arrested for three or more violent felonies.

Short said he hopes the bill will get bipartisan support. “I would expect lawmakers that supported any of the recent gun control measures on the supposition of reducing violence to support this proposal,” Short said. “To vote for the former, without doing the same for the latter, would lack any credibility.”

The legislature this session also is considering a **bill** requiring a permit to buy a handgun. It was assigned to the House Appropriations Committee May 18.

**GBC** 1886 **Goldey-Beacom COLLEGE**

## NEW GRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

- Certificate in Marketing
- Certificate in Human Resource Management
- Certificate in Health Care Management
- Certificate in Entrepreneurship
- Certificate in Information Technology

**LOCATION** | **CONTACT** | **WEBSITE**

4701 Limestone Road  
Wilmington, DE 19808

302-225-6248  
Admissions@gbc.edu

www.gbc.edu/

**DELAWARE LIVE**





## GENDER-AFFIRMING BILL DRAWS GOP CRITICISM; ACTION POSTPONED

BY SAM HAUT

A bill introduced June 15 adding protections for gender-affirming care in Delaware has drawn criticism from Republicans for the impact it would have on parental rights.

**House Bill 230**, sponsored by Rep. Deshanna Neal, D-Elsmere, would protect medical providers in Delaware who provide gender-affirming care from being prosecuted by other states that ban the practice. Neal said in a statement June 16 that the bill will not go in front of a committee this year.


“I want to be clear that I filed this bill to begin the conversation and open a dialogue on the issue,” said Neal, who uses they/them/their pronouns. “I will not be pushing the bill forward in committee this year. Instead, I want to spend the break building support and educating people about this very critical—and very misunderstood—issue.”

The General Assembly’s legislative session lasts two years. Any bill introduced this year can be heard next year, too, without being reintroduced. If it fails then, the bill must be reintroduced for the next session.

HB 230 defines gender-affirming care as:

- Suppressing the development of endogenous secondary sex characteristics.
- Aligning the patient’s appearance or body with their gender identity.
- Alleviating someone’s symptoms of gender dysphoria which cause significant distress.
- Finding ways to integrate someone’s gender identity, reduce distress, and increase family acceptance, all in developmentally appropriate ways.

[READ MORE HERE](#)



**Good for the heart  
and soul**

Nothing brings families together like a delicious meal.

Locally owned and operated for more than 25 years, **Kenny Family Shoprites** are delighted to nourish our Delaware community!

[@kennyfamstores](#) [kennyfamilystores](#)





# Culture

**DELAWARE**  
**LIVE**  
OUR STATE. OUR NEWS. OUR HOME.

photo link: Clear Space Theatre Company







# NEW MUSEUM OF NATURE EXHIBIT LETS KIDS LAND ON OTHER PLANETS

BY BETSY PRICE

Visitors have a choice in the [Delaware Museum of Nature and Science's](#) *Be The Astronaut* exhibit opening Saturday: Land on the moon, Mars or Jupiter.

The exhibit, the first that the museum has offered since revealing its total gut-and-renovation a year ago, combines science and gaming. It not only allows kids to learn the science that put mankind into space, but also try their hands at leaving the atmosphere, landing on another planet and driving unfamiliar terrain. Parents are allowed to play, too.

*Be The Astronaut* will open during June 24's Family Fun Days, which has moved indoors because of the forecast of rain, and ends Sept. 11. The exhibit had been scheduled to be at the museum in summer of 2020, but

the museum was closed because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Executive Director Halsey Spruance, who spent a few minutes at one kiosk trying to land on Mars, said the exhibit emphasizes the museum's decision to highlight science as well as nature. "Now we've got more to offer," he said.

## MUSEUM'S RENOVATION SUCCESS

*Be the Astronaut* also will tie in with an exhibit in the Discovery Gallery near the museum's entrance entitled *Sun, Earth and the Universe*, he pointed out.

"It's fantastic the way it's working," Spruance said. "The platform for getting into different subjects rather than just biology are huge. We can talk about chemistry,

physics. And it's not just about the physical attributes of space, but also about how do you get there. So it's engineering and mathematics. That's all an expansion of what we've done before."

The museum saw 90,329 visitors in the year from its May 2022 opening, a few hundred over its goal of 90,000. Spruance hopes the new exhibit will keep the momentum going.

*Be the Astronaut* includes a small play area for kids who are too young to really comprehend the information on panels or really enjoy the screens. They are more likely to appeal to those six and up who have a bit of patience and experience with gaming.

Visitors will get a look at the equipment an astronaut wears, including the suit, helmet and boots. While the information panel doesn't say so, Director of Exhibits Helen Bilinsky believes the suit on display was made by LLG of Dover, which outfitted NASA for decades.

The exhibit is split into three parts: navigation, the science behind flying into space and learning to put into action what you learned in stations one and two by sitting down and trying your hand at landing. All three stations include a gaming-type screen that allows you to practice leaving the earth's atmosphere and more. Short film clips pop up to tell visitors what to do.

It's not easy-peasy.

Bilinsky, who had practiced until she could leave the atmosphere in one shot, flubbed it three times trying to show the museum staff how it worked. That station also allows people to practice driving on another planet by using arrows.

[READ MORE HERE](#)





## HAGLEY MERGES BIKE & HIKE, DOG DAYS INTO SUMMER NIGHTS

BY BETSY PRICE

Hagley Museum and Library has rolled the success of its long-standing Bike, Hike and Brew nights and its Dog Days of Summer, which allowed guests to bring furry pals, into an all-encompassing Summer Nights program. Now every Wednesday night, patrons can bring their families and pets to the site of the Du Pont Co.'s gunpowder factory along the Brandywine River to picnic, walk its trails and have a drink while listening to live music. Before this summer, dogs were only welcomed one night a month.

The revamp came after Hagley officials considered the enthusiastic feedback they were getting and decided to enhance elements that people really enjoyed.

“We decided to make every evening dog friendly,” said Laura Jury, Hagley’s marketing manager.

Organizers added yard games like hula hoops, cornhole, bubbles and more, as well as live music every Wednes-

day. In addition, guests can grab a Dogfish Head craft brew or one of their canned Culinary Crafted Cocktails, which includes flavors such as grapefruit vodka crush, blood orange vodka crush, pineapple and orange rum crush and lemon-lime gin crush.

Guests are encouraged to bring a picnic or stop by Janssen’s Market or Pizza by Elizabeth to enjoy at the picnic tables.

Summer Nights are weather dependent, and they’ve had a bit of a rough start, though. The June 7 debut went off fine, but the June 14 event was canceled because of smoke from the Canadian wildfires and the June 21 event because of rain. Organizers are hoping that’s all the bad luck they’ll have this season, Jury said.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

FUR BABY  
PET RESORT

DOGGIE  
DAYCARE  
IN MILFORD

[LEARN MORE](#)



*We'll Keep Your Fur Baby Happy & Healthy!*



# WHERE YOU CAN HAVE A BLAST AT FIREWORKS ACROSS DELAWARE

BY KEN MAMMARELLA

Most Delaware places known for Fourth of July fireworks and other Independence Day activities have announced their plans. Organizers consistently ask for people to arrive early and leave late, and the Delaware Department of Transportation warns that many events close roads, too. In other words, traffic could be bad.

Dusk is about 9:05 p.m. on the Tuesday, the Fourth, but fireworks could start as late as 9:30. Here's a lineup:

## FIREWORKS ON (OR NEAR) THE FOURTH

**Bethany Beach** says its holiday celebration is “our biggest party of the year.” The fun starts with a 5K run/walk on Sunday, July 2. On the Fourth, there's a parade at noon featuring floats (the theme is “Sand & Sea in '23”), bands, motor vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians.

Parade awards will be announced at the bandstand at 7:15 p.m., followed by a concert at 7:30 and the fireworks at dusk.

**Dewey Beach** gets fireworks on the Fourth, thanks to businessman Alex Pires.

The **Dover Fourth of July Celebration** this year begins on Saturday, July 1, when First State Heritage Park presents the holiday as celebrated in the late 1800s, with lawn games, live music and other activities. There will be walking tours and the Declaration of Independence will be read out from the steps of the Old State House at 2 p.m., just as it was in July 1776. The events on July 4 start at 10 a.m. with working tours of the park, and the declaration read again at 2 p.m. Artisans and

**Proud partners in our  
Delaware communities**

mountaire.com



food vendors will be operating by 4 p.m. A parade starts at 6 p.m. on Park Drive, and it heads west on Lookerman Street, turns left on State Street and terminates at Water Street. A DJ starts spinning at 6:30 p.m., with fireworks at 9:15 p.m.

The **Hockessin Fourth of July Festival and Fireworks** includes neighborhood relays and a field day in the morning, a parade in the afternoon and the fireworks at dusk on July 4. The fireworks can be seen all over Hockessin, the website says, with the main viewing from Swift Park, Piedmont Baseball Fields, Hockessin Library and Artesian Soccer Fields.

[READ MORE HERE](#)





# Business

**DELAWARE**  
**LIVE**  
OUR STATE. OUR NEWS. OUR HOME.

photo credit: fauxels / PEXELS





# PAID LEAVE HASN'T STARTED, BUT CHANGES ALREADY SUGGESTED

BY JAREK RUTZ

Proposed laws shifting who deals with appeals to the state's new paid leave program, which starts in 2026, drew little comment in Wednesday's Senate Health and Social Services Committee meeting.

**Senate Bill 178**, sponsored by Sen. Sarah McBride, D-Wilmington and committee chair, makes technical changes to private plans under the **Family and Medical Leave Program**. The new program requires Delaware businesses with 25 employers or more to join the program, which is paid for by a .08% tax on employee wages, split between the employee and the employer. Businesses that already have a paid leave program must apply to be exempted from the state program.

When it starts in January 2026, workers will be allowed to apply to take up to 12 weeks of paid leave for child-births, caring for parents and other family situations. Benefits are capped at 80% of an employee's salary or \$900 per week, whichever is less.

SB 178 revises the appeal process for when the Department of Labor denies an application from a business, so that the hearing is conducted by the secretary of the department instead of the Family and Medical Leave Insurance Appeal Board.

The Appeals Board conducts hearings on denials of individual claims for benefits under the Family and Medical Leave Program. Individuals will not be eligible for these benefits until January 1, 2026. That means the board does not need to be established in 2023, and the expertise members need is in areas other than those needed for appeal decisions.

"The process now will be staff within the Paid Leave Division will make the initial determination and the appeal would then go to the secretary instead of a board," McBride said, "and then further the entity would have the ability to appeal to the Superior Court from the secretary's determination."

[READ MORE HERE](#)

## Providing Big Support For Delaware's Small Businesses



**Delaware**  
DIVISION OF SMALL BUSINESS

[business.delaware.gov](https://business.delaware.gov)



photo credit: Jorge Zapata / PEXELS



# Food & Dining

**DELAWARE**  
**LIVE**  
OUR STATE. OUR NEWS. OUR HOME.







## A MAC-AND-CHEESE FACEOFF; BAR REVERIE OPENS; MONTY'S 'CLAW'

BY PAM GEORGE

Dining in Delaware is far from dull. The state—aka the Small Wonder—boasts James Beard Award nominees, reality cooking show stars and a supportive network of chefs, restaurateurs and industry associations. So, if you're in the culinary doldrums, it might be because you haven't kept up on the tasty gossip.

We're here to spill the tea.

### MAC ATTACK ON 'BEAT BOBBY FLAY'

Delaware's Hari Cameron accepted the challenge to beat celebrity chef Bobby Flay on the Food Network. Cameron and his brother Orion own **Grandpa Mac** on Coastal Highway between Lewes and Rehoboth Beach, which specializes in pasta dishes. The creative Delaware chef won the heat against the other contestant, who left more than a few bones in her sea bass, in the June 14 show. Consequently, Flay let Cameron select the dish

for the final round, and he chose—you guessed it—mac-and-cheese.

Cameron made his noodles from scratch, mixed them with seven cheeses and topped them with toasted breadcrumbs and pancetta. Flay used dried pasta, and he rehydrated porcini and portabella mushrooms.

In the end, the judges felt Cameron's version lacked seasoning. He couldn't disagree more. "I thought it was perfect."

Cameron is becoming a familiar face on TV. He was also on "Snack VS Chef" on Netflix. We're guessing it won't be his last appearance.

### GROTTO PIZZA UNVEILS SUMMER MENU

Grotto Pizza also has a signature dish and it's served with a swirl. But the restaurant group that started in Rehoboth Beach also offers seasonal menus to reflect the culinary trends.

Recent additions include a flatbread topped with pulled chicken in a Korean barbecue sauce and chicken salad—a Delaware staple—on brioche or an iceberg wedge. Cocktails include Stateside Springwater made with Stateside Urbancraft Vodka, hand-squeezed lemon and lime, club soda and a splash of Sprite.

### NEW NORTH OF THE CANAL

David Dietz of **BBC Tavern** fame opened **Bar Reverie** on June 15 and he can easily keep tabs on both—the outdoor covered patios practically kiss. The new restaurant serves coffee and pastries from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. Put your diet on hold: Gretchen Sianni, formerly of De La Coeur Café et Pâtisserie in Wilmington, is working the whisk and mixer.

In the evening, the wine takes center stage—indeed, the 24-tap temperature-controlled cuvenee system is the focal point behind the bar. All told the restaurant has more than 350 wines, and the preservation system allows bartenders to pour even pricy bottles by the glass without fear of wasting the rest.

Highlights from the first dinner menu include the tomato tart with a cheesy, flaky crust; deviled eggs topped with caviar; crispy grilled snapper; and a 10-ounce steak with Bordelaise and gratin dauphinoise (sliced potatoes baked in cream).

### MONTY'S MOMENTOUS MONTH

To the south, Steve "Monty" Montgomery is a partner in some of the most successful establishments on the Culinary Coast, starting with The Starboard. In the past month, his experienced team has opened not one but three restaurants.

[READ MORE HERE](#)





photo credit: Delaware.gov

# Government

**DELAWARE**  
**LIVE**  
OUR STATE. OUR NEWS. OUR HOME.





# HOUSE PASSES UPDATED POLICE BILL OF RIGHTS BY LARGE MARGIN

BY SAM HAUT

The Delaware House of Representatives this week overwhelmingly passed a bill that would establish new standards for reporting police misconduct allegations, hailed by sponsors as a giant leap toward transparency.

After the bill passed, the Speaker of the House Rep. Pete Schwartkopf, D-Rehoboth Beach, thanked the people who helped get the bill passed.

“I also want to thank the police officers in this chamber as well for coming forward with a plan...saying, we’re not fighting anymore, we want to help, we want to fix this thing,” Schwartkopf said. “What it takes sometimes to get really meaningful language changed, is to get the right people at the table.”

**House Substitute 1 for House Bill 205**, sponsored by Rep. Melissa Minor-Brown, D-New Castle, would require an investigating agency to prepare a detailed report of its internal investigation for any case involved a police

officer and publicly release it. That includes:

- Firing a gun at a person.
- Using force that causes serious physical injury.
- Having a sustained case of sexual assault or sexual harassment having been committed by the officer from an internal report.
- Having a sustained finding of domestic violence having been committed.
- A sustained finding that the officer has engaged in dishonest conduct.

The Criminal Justice Council will post the narrative of the case on its website within 30 days of receiving the narrative from the investigating agency, according to the bill. Those records must be preserved for at least 25 years and would be posted on the Police Officer Standards and Training Commission’s website.

[READ MORE HERE](#)



GET YOUR **BREAST** CANCER SCREENING.

*You're worth it.*



Yearly, if you're 40 or older.



Earlier, if you have a family history.



The earlier you know, the easier it is to treat.

Talk to your health care provider today. Don't have one? A screening nurse navigator can help you schedule a screening. Call 2-1-1 or visit [HealthyDelaware.org/Breast](https://HealthyDelaware.org/Breast).





# EV CAR REIMBURSEMENTS, SCHOOL BUSES DISCUSSED IN SENATE

BY JAREK RUTZ

Environment-friendly cars and school buses were the focus of the Senate Environment, Energy and Transportation Committee Thursday, and legislators appeared supportive of laws regarding both.

**House Bill 12**, sponsored by Rep. Sophie Phillips, D-Christiana, establishes a rebate program for new and used electric vehicles and plug-in hybrids, using \$2 million in funding from the **Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative**. The bill would give a \$2,500 rebate for electric vehicles and a \$1,000 rebate for plug-in hybrids, with the available funding enough to cover up to 4,000 electric vehicles and 1,000 plug-in hybrids.

“This legislation is one more element of the ongoing effort to ensure that the transition to electric vehicles that we are increasingly seeing in our society is truly accessible for more and more people across the state of Delaware,” said Sen. Sarah McBride, D-Wilmington. A max vehicle price cap is established at \$50,000.

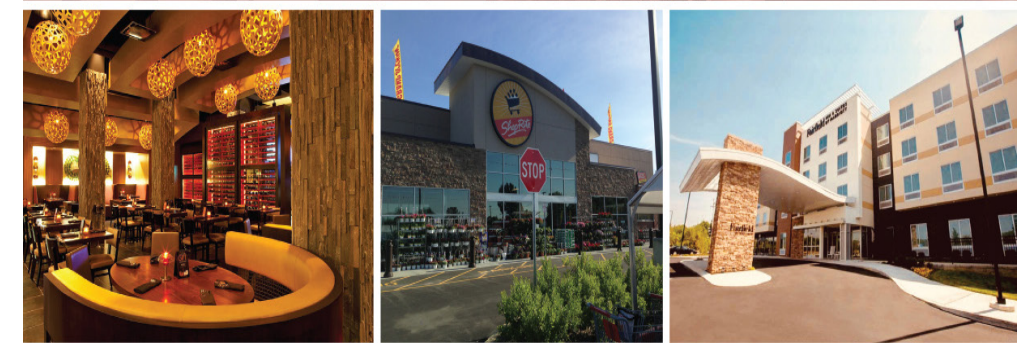
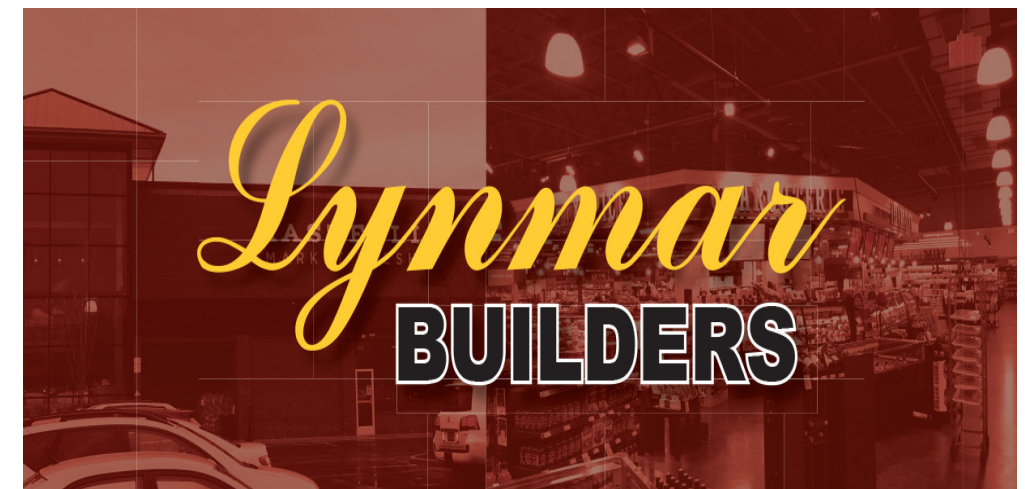
“One of the things that all of us have been able to agree upon on this discussion around electric vehicles is that people deserve a choice,” McBride said. “This helps to ensure that folks have truly a real choice that is an accessible option for them financially.”

The bill adds used vehicles to the existing **Clean Transportation Vehicle Rewritten Rebate Program** through **DNREC**.

“Funding does not come from the General Fund, it’s not coming from next year’s budget,” Sen. Eric Buckson, R-Dover, pointed out in support of the bill.

Senate committees do not hold public vote, so the outcome of the bill was not known at press time. It will be posted, usually hours later, on the **General Assembly’s** bill tracker. If released, HB 12 will be placed on the Senate ready list.

[READ MORE HERE](#)



**WE BUILD YOUR FUTURE**  
[Lynmar@lynmarbuilders.com](mailto:Lynmar@lynmarbuilders.com)

Established Over 35 Years

Design • Build

General Contracting

Construction Management

Servicing: NJ • PA • DE • MD

**856-456-0856**

Please visit our website at [Lynmarbuilders.com](http://Lynmarbuilders.com)





## BILL CHANGING STATE VOTING RULES SEEMS HEADED TO SENATE FLOOR

BY SAM HAUT

A bill that would ditch a constitutional requirement that people must live in Delaware for a year before voting, officially change the voting age to 18, remove the literacy requirement for voting and make it easier for ex-felons to vote seems headed to the full Senate.

**Senate Bill 180**, sponsored by Sen. Kyle Gay, D-Elsmere, would do all that. Because the bill is a constitutional amendment, it requires a two-thirds vote and would need to be approved by both this session of the General Assembly and the next one, which starts in 2025. Senate committees don't vote publicly on bills, so it was not immediately apparent what the vote is, but the bill faced no major objections.

SB 180 makes it easier for ex-felons to vote by allowing felons to vote if they are on a work release, early release, supervised custody, community supervision, probation,

parole or suspension. The constitution previously only allowed exceptions for probation, parole or suspension. Those in prison would not be allowed to vote during the time of their incarceration. The bill also would forbid the state from ever setting up a program that requires felons to pay to have their voting rights restored.

The constitution now allows the General Assembly to take voting rights away from someone who has committed a crime. This bill would not allow that.

Neal Ubriani, policy and research director for the Institute for Responsive Government, said there are an estimated 4,300 people in Delaware who aren't incarcerated but still can't vote because of a past felony conviction.

[READ MORE HERE](#)



Unwind by  
the Brandywine.



Enjoy music, food trucks,  
beverages, & ice cream  
Wednesday evenings June  
through August. Dogs welcome.

**CHILL OUT**





# STATE BENEFITS COMMITTEE OKS RATE HIKE FOR RETIREE INSURANCE

BY SAM HAUT

The State Employee Benefits Committee unanimously approved raising the rate retirees pay for their Special Medicfill insurance plan. The committee in May voted to raise Medicfill rates by 5% starting Jan. 1, 2024, through June 30, 2024. On Tuesday, though, the vote was to approve a specific dollar increase.

The increased rates will lead to no change for those who retired on or prior to July 1, 2012, as the state is paying for the entire plan of those members, costing the state \$482.34 a month for the Special Medicfill plan with prescriptions and \$273.46 a month for a Special Medicfill plan without a prescription.

For pensioners who retired after July 1, 2012, those with a prescription would have to pay an additional \$24.10 a month on average and those without a pre-

scription would have to pay an additional \$13.66 a month on average.

Claire DeMatteis, secretary of the Department of Human Resources, said that 65% of the Medicare pensioner population won't see an increase as they don't pay anything for coverage because the state covers the cost for those retirees.

The SEBC on Tuesday also discussed Highmark's Custom Care Management Unit. It is a program that helps people with chronic diseases manage those illnesses. In Delaware, members are slightly older and at a higher risk than national averages. The average age for those in Delaware is 34.5, compared to the national average of 34.4.

Dr. Mark Jacobson, a medical director with Highmark, said that there's about \$850 per member per month in savings for people who use the case management program. Those who use the Transitions of Care Program, another case management program for high risk, high cost admissions see a \$964 per member per month decrease in costs, he said. Both of those numbers came from an internal report by Highmark which compared people who similar geography, socioeconomic status, gender, and age, and compared the costs of medical care for someone who was on the program and someone who wasn't.

Those in the Custom Care Management Unit have more chronic conditions than the average, with 38.6% of those on the plan having two or more chronic conditions compared to Highmark's average of 29%.

In the fourth quarter of 2022, 11 % of those insured by the state were in the Custom Care Management Unit. That's up from 9.9% for the fourth quarter of the 2021 fiscal year, and up from the average of 4%.

The number of people in the Custom Care Management Unit that nurses were able to reach and talk to, called the engagement rate, was 88.6% for the fourth quarter of the 2022 fiscal year, compared to 83.9% the year before. Jacobson said that percentage is higher than they expected. When Custom Care Management Units were first developed, they expected the percent engaged to be between 4% to 5%.





IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF DELAWARE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,  
v.  
ROBERT HUNTER BIDEN,  
Defendant.

)  
)  
) Criminal Action No. 23- 61-UNA  
)  
)  
)

INFORMATION

The United States Attorney for the District of Delaware charges that:

COUNT ONE

On or about October 12, 2018, through on or about October 23, 2018, in the District of Delaware, the defendant Robert Hunter Biden, knowing that he was an unlawful user of and addicted to a controlled substance as defined in Title 21, United States Code, Section 802, did knowingly possess a firearm, that is, a Colt Cobra 38SPL revolver with serial number RA 551363, said firearm having been shipped and transported in interstate commerce.

In violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 922(g)(3) and 924(a)(2) (2018).

DAVID C. WEISS  
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY

By:

*[Signature]*

FILED

JUN 20 2023

# HUNTER BIDEN CHARGED WITH TAX, FIREARM OFFENSES IN DELAWARE

BY BETSY PRICE

Hunter Biden, son of President Joe Biden, has been charged with two misdemeanor tax offenses and one felony firearm offense by the **United States attorney for Delaware**. Hunter Biden, who's been the focus of a national uproar about his finances and the contents of his laptop, had agreed to enter a plea of guilty to the tax offenses and enter a pre-trial diversion agreement about the firearm charge.

Hunter Biden is charged with two violations of failure to pay income tax and one violation of unlawful possession of a firearm by a person prohibited. If convicted, he faces a maximum penalty of 12 months in prison on each of the tax charges and a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison on the firearm charge. Many cases like this are settled without jail time. The press release from U.S. Attorney David C. Weiss points out that sentences for federal crimes are typically less than the maximum penalties and are determined by a federal district court judge based on sentencing guidelines and other factors.

The court records show Hunter Biden received taxable income in excess of \$1,500,000 annually in calendar years 2017 and 2018. Despite owing in excess of \$100,000 in federal income taxes each year, he did not pay the income tax due for either year. The court records do not name the source of the income.

According to the firearm information, from on or about Oct. 12, 2018 through Oct. 23, 2018, Hunter Biden possessed a firearm despite knowing he was an unlawful user of and addicted to a controlled substance.

A pretrial diversion program is designed to resolve a criminal case and usually involved the defendant avoiding jail time and a criminal conviction. Hunter Biden's pre-trial diversion agreement on the firearm charge will be dealt with at a proceeding to be scheduled by the assigned United States District Court judge, the press release said.

U.S. Sen. Chris Coons, a Democrat, said the charges come at the end of a "five-year-long thorough investigation by a Trump-appointed U.S. Attorney."

"From press accounts, I am encouraged that Hunter is taking responsibility for his actions, paying the taxes that he owes, and preparing to move on with his life," Coons said.

Sen. Tom Carper, a Democrat, later echoed Coons' comment, saying the investigation was "free from political interference."

"This is how the rule of law works," Carper's statement said. "Hunter Biden is a private citizen and I am encouraged that he is taking responsibility for his actions."





# BILL TO CURB AGGRESSIVE MEDICAL DEBT COLLECTION GOES TO HOUSE

BY SAM HAUT

A bill that seeks to stop aggressive tactics for collecting medical debt easily passed the House Economic Development/Banking/Insurance & Commerce Committee meeting Tuesday.

**Senate Substitute 2 for Senate Bill 8**, sponsored by Sen. Spiros Mantzavinos, D-Elsmere, would forbid a medical creditor or medical debt collector from arresting someone, forcing someone into court for being in contempt, foreclosing on someone's property or garnishing someone's wages or bank account when trying to collect someone's medical debt. The bill also would hold large health care facilities and medical creditors liable for actions taken by collectors who violate the rules.

Medical creditors or debt collectors wouldn't be able to report information on a debt to a consumer reporting agency for at least one year or within three months of the most recent payment on the debt. Patients with a

debt of \$500 or more must be offered a payment plan that may not exceed 5% of the person's gross monthly income.

The substitute differs from the parent bill by requiring large health-care facilities to give information to uninsured patients about eligibility and the application process for medical assistance, increasing the limit for offering payment plans from \$200 to \$500, and removing a requirement that written notices be sent in someone's primary language.

The bill was approved with three in favor, five on its merits, and one against. It unanimously passed the Senate June 14.

Rep. Kimberly Williams, D-Stanton/Newport, said the bill will help Delawareans pay off medical debt.

"Medical debt has had such a large impact on all Delawareans and Americans for years," Williams said. "I've

heard about this in my district. I'm sure you have heard it in your district as well...According to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau medical debt held by Delawareans total \$401 million."

Rep. Jeffrey Spiegelman, R-Townsend/Hartly, said the bill would make it difficult for hospitals to collect money.

"There's absolutely nothing that the healthcare facility can do if I simply don't want to pay," Spiegelman said. "If there's no way without charging late fees, without being able to garnish, without being able to do that, it doesn't seem to be much ability if this law passes, to get the money out there...They can't charge me fees. I'll pay when I feel like paying, and there ain't nothing you can do about it."

Williams responded that most people have good intentions and are having a hard time paying.

"I've talked to constituents who have cancer, and they have hundreds of thousands of dollars in debt. I've lost constituents, and thousands are still alive saying how am I going to pay this," Williams said. "And I think if you have good intentions of making a minimum amount, something you can afford. Someone shouldn't lose their house because they can't pay their medical bills and it's not their fault."

Spiegelman said he's worried people will take advantage of the law.

"It sounds like we are providing an umbrella safe haven for the people who deserve it, people who can't or are struggling to pay, along with the nefarious ones who will take advantage of this by saying, 'Hey, I'm just not going to pay,'" Spiegelman said.

[READ MORE HERE](#)





# FIVE-YEAR PROPERTY REASSESSMENT BILL ON WAY TO CARNEY

BY JAREK RUTZ

After decades of no regular property assessments, all three Delaware counties likely will be required to conduct them every five years, after the current reassessment forced by a court order ends in 2025.

**House Bill 62**, sponsored by Rep. Madinah Wilson-Anton, D-Newark, passed the Senate Tuesday. It would require counties to reassess real property values at least once every five years, starting with the next reassessment. The bill now goes to Gov. John Carney for his signature before becoming law.

Property reassessments have not been done in New Castle County since 1983, in Kent County since 1987 and in Sussex County since 1974. Kent County will finish its reassessment first, by the end of 2024, with New Castle and Sussex counties having a deadline of the end of 2025.

“An absence of consistent and routine property reassessments from one end of our state to the other has played a major role in the funding disparities and socioeconomic inequities that have been hallmarks of Delaware’s public education system for decades,” said Sen. Elizabeth “Tizzy” Lockman.

One reason property values are important, as is updating them regularly, is because they dictate how much a resident pays in local taxes, which affects school funding. Lockman said it’s crucial to prevent residential property tax and education funding systems from falling further and further out of alignment with reality. By establishing a clear timeline for reassessment, Lockman said Delaware can ensure that its assessed values are accurately reflected, promoting fairness and equity throughout the state. She pointed out that neighboring

state Maryland requires reassessments every three years and Pennsylvania conducts them annually.

Lockman read a statement from the Delaware Association of Counties, which said “the counties collectively see the inherent value and regularly reassessing property values in accordance with industry standards in order to avoid costly legal suits and the more expensive boots-on-the-ground method of reassessment that is currently underway in all three counties.”

Sen. Eric Buckson, R-Dover, said he supports the bill. “It’s a real clear statement to recognize that Delaware has a duty and obligation based on the laws that we currently have in our constitution to ensure that we don’t go down the path that led us to where we are today,” he said. The current system of reassessment is flawed, he said.

Buckson also cited the **lawsuit** that “forced the state’s hands” into conducting reassessments for the first time in decades. The NAACP of Delaware and Delawareans for Educational Opportunity filed a lawsuit against the state in 2018, claiming the lack of consistent reassessments had denied adequate funding for Delaware schools, particularly those serving disadvantaged students. Among other requirements, the decision of that lawsuit required Delaware to conduct property reassessments.

“Nobody wants to do this, but it is what it is,” Buckson said. “I did talk to the counties, Kent County specifically, and they recognize the five years has been a fair approach.”







INDIAN RIVER  
HIGH SCHOOL

FIRE DEPT.  
CONNECTION

RESERVED  
PARKING

# Education

**DELAWARE**  
**LIVE**  
OUR STATE. OUR NEWS. OUR HOME.







# CAPE'S MUSIKA NAMED STUDENT REP. ON STATE EDUCATION BOARD

BY JAREK RUTZ

Cape Henlopen High's Gus Musika has been picked to represent Delaware's students on the State Board of Education. The rising senior will start on the board in July and will serve for the 2023-2024 school year.

The son of an educator, Musika is a varsity athlete and a member of the National Honor Society. He plans on having a career in the skies, and is training to earn a private pilot's license and pursue an education in aviation.

"We need students like Gus to offer their perspective as we make decisions about education in our state," said Gov. John Carney. "Gus brings unique experience to this role and I appreciate his willingness to serve."

According to a news release, Musika hopes to advocate for innovative and accelerated learning opportunities for students of all backgrounds.

"The Delaware State Board of Education values student voice," said Shawn Brittingham, president of the board. "We welcome Gus and look forward to hearing his perspective about public education in Delaware."

A 2018 law added two non-voting seats to the State Board of Education, one being a student representative and the other a teacher. The board typically meets on the third Thursday of every month. Meeting information can be found [HERE](#).







# APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS LAW AIMS TO COMBAT TEACHER SHORTAGE

BY JAREK RUTZ

The most recent plan to attract teachers to Delaware schools was applauded in the Senate Education Committee Wednesday. **House Bill 138**, sponsored by Rep. Kim Williams, D-Marshallton and chair of the House Education Committee, addresses the ongoing national teacher shortage.

The legislation establishes a new tool to recruit and retain educators through an apprenticeship pilot program. This model will build off of grow-your-own educator strategy and year-long teacher residency models, which have become more popular throughout Delaware schools as a way to grow the teacher pipeline.

Five states have already introduced legislation to implement teacher apprenticeships and 17 states are

exploring or implementing this model, said Sen. Laura Sturgeon, D-Hockessin and Senate Education Committee chair.

“It is our understanding that in the 2023-24 school year, Appoquinimink School District and Wilmington University are planning to pilot this approach,” she said.

Delaware will receive \$337,102 from a U.S. Department of Labor apprenticeship grant on May 1, 2023. “This grant includes \$150,000 that will pay for the pilot between Appoquinimink School District and Wilmington University,” Sturgeon said. “Delaware Department of Labor will use the remaining amount for other apprenticeship programs.”

[READ MORE HERE](#)

**URSULINE ACADEMY**

**REGISTER TO ATTEND A FALL OPEN HOUSE!**

Upper School | October 3  
Lower & Middle | November 11

**Do your dollars make sense?**

All DE schools are funded through a strict formula no matter the needs of the students.

The "one-size-fits-all" approach has not worked, right?

If we want DE to get smart like our neighbors...

Join the conversation.  
**Click to subscribe to our newsletter.**

FIRST STATE EDUCATE  
EXPECT EXCELLENCE · ACT TOGETHER





photo credit: Glenn Frazer

DELAWARE  
LIVE

OUR STATE. OUR NEWS. OUR HOME.





|              |     |       |
|--------------|-----|-------|
| MIN 5        | 2-1 | ▼ 3   |
| WALTER       |     | P: 37 |
| B. W. CASTRO |     | 1-1   |



## FORMER BLUE HEN MAKES MAJOR LEAGUE DEBUT

BY NICK HALLIDAY

The Minnesota Twins shut out the Boston Red Sox 6-0 Thursday in a baseball matinee. The big news from that game was not the score or the complete game shut out thrown by Twins starter Joe Ryan, it was the major league debut of former Blue Hen and Hodgson Silver Eagle Brandon Walter.

Walter, a New Castle native, played his high school baseball for Hodgson Silver Eagles and played his collegiate baseball for the Delaware Blue Hens. After three seasons at the University of Delaware, Walter was drafted by the Red Sox, with the 797th overall pick in the 26th round.

Walter entered the game in the second inning against the Twins in relief of Justin Garza. He ended up pitch-

ing 6.2 innings in relief allowing three runs, on three hits. Walter did settle down after giving up three runs in his first two innings of work. He threw a total of 92 pitches with 56 of them being strikes.

Walter did accomplish some firsts as he recorded his first ever major league strikeout when he struck out Max Kelder. Unfortunately, he did give up his first major league home run when Byron Buxton took him deep for his second home run of the game. Brandon also recorded 20 or more outs in relief, which hadn't been done in the Red Sox organization since 1944.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

# RANGE DAY

ARMED & EDUCATED

**INDOOR RANGE**

**FIREARM TRAINING**

- Concealed Carry
- Handguns for Beginners
- AR Fundamentals
- Defensive Shooting
- First Aid & Treatments

**PERSONAL SAFETY**

- Self-Defense Seminar
- Personal Safety Event
- Children's Firearm Safety Workshop
- Women's Only Courses

**Open to the Public**

**Memberships Available**

**15yd Handgun Bay**

**25yd Rifle Bay**

302-567-2530

**More Information**  
[www.bestshotde.com](http://www.bestshotde.com)

16797 Coastal Hwy, Lewes, DE 19958



# Stay Connected

**DELAWARE LIVE IS YOUR SOURCE FOR NEWS AND INFORMATION ACROSS ALL OF DELAWARE. STAY CONNECTED WITH US BY PHONE, EMAIL OR SOCIAL MEDIA BY CLICKING ON THE LINKS.**



**PHONE: 302-542-9231**



**For News and Information: [news@delawarelive.com](mailto:news@delawarelive.com)  
To Advertise With Us: [shupe@delawarelive.com](mailto:shupe@delawarelive.com)**



**[instagram.com/delaware.live](https://www.instagram.com/delaware.live)**



**[twitter.com/live\\_delaware](https://twitter.com/live_delaware)**



**[facebook.com/delawarelivenews/](https://www.facebook.com/delawarelivenews/)**



**Watch Delaware Live on YouTube!**



**[linkedin.com/company/delaware-live-news](https://www.linkedin.com/company/delaware-live-news)**





OUR STATE. OUR NEWS. OUR HOME.



Without these collaborators, this outlet would not be possible:

Bryan Shupe, CEO

Betsy Price, Editor

Sonja M. Frey, Publisher

*John Mollura Photography*

# Design your 2023 through Intentional Business and Marketing Planning

As a locally-owned company, Delaware LIVE News takes pride in working alongside regional businesses to develop digital marketing campaigns, through our daily news platforms.

From large corporations like Christiana Care, Delaware Tech Community College, and Delaware Department of Health to small shops like Fur Baby Pet Resort, Dolce Coffee Shop, and Benvenuto Tuscan Restaurant, we customize each plan to optimize the needs of each of our marketing partners.

I would love the opportunity to meet with you for 10-15 minutes to see how we can help. You can click the link to set up a meeting with me in our virtual office: <https://meetings.hubspot.com/shupe1>

*CEO, Bryan Shupe / 302-542-9231 / shupe@delawarelive.com*

