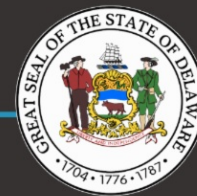




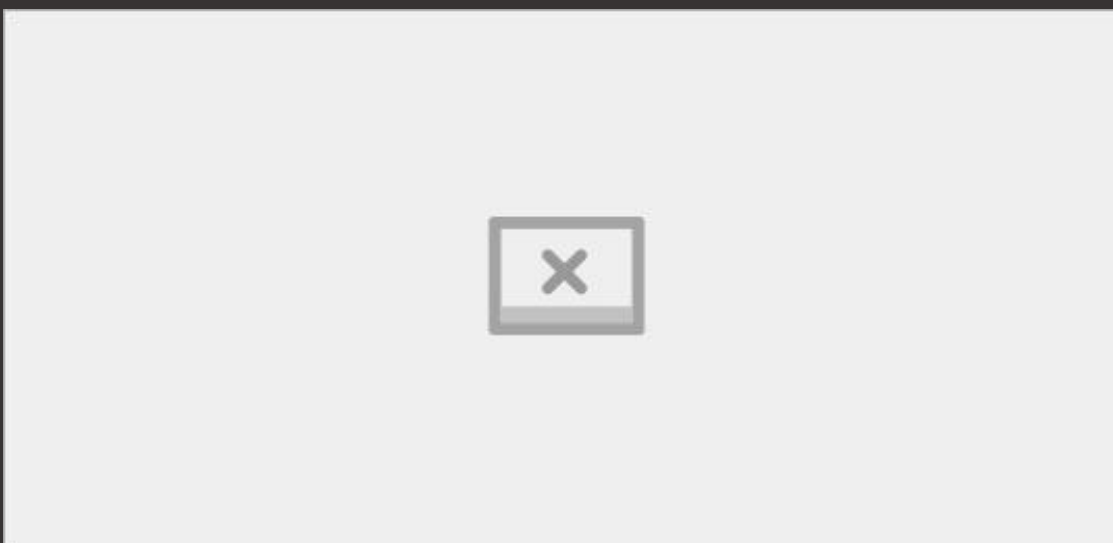
Office of
**Lieutenant Governor
Bethany Hall-Long**



Working for a stronger,
healthier Delaware for all of us.

July 7, 2023 | ltgov.delaware.gov

2023 End of Session Recap



2023 Legislative Session Comes to a Close in Dover

Now that the 2023 legislative session has ended, I want to share some of the work we've been doing in Dover this year to improve the lives of Delawareans up and down the state.

This year, the General Assembly took bold steps by passing legislation to invest in education, strengthen the right to representation for low-income renters, legalize marijuana and increase transparency in public safety.

And while Delaware has made huge strides in protecting abortion rights, we must do more. I will continue to work with leaders in the legislature to ensure that all Delawareans have access to the reproductive care they need

Keep reading below to see what else we've been up to this year!

General Assembly Passes Historic Budget in June



Thanks to the work of Governor Carney and his administration, the General Assembly, and the Joint Finance Committee, Delaware passed a budget bill making historic investments to fight climate change and protect our shores, improve our infrastructure, make access to childcare more affordable, and increase funding for teacher pay and early childhood education programs. Some of the key highlights include:

- 9% increase in pay for classroom teachers
- Doubling funding to \$12.2 million for the Early Childhood Assistance Program, helping our youngest learners and helping more parents afford childcare
- Allocating \$31.8 million to improve Delaware's drinking water, drainage, and water resources
- \$7.5 million to protect Delaware shorelines and beaches
- New investments in Economic Development initiatives and affordable housing

Legislation in Delaware Creates First Rare Disease Advisory Council

**SB 55: Bill to Create Delaware's First Rare Disease
Advisory Council Passes Delaware House**

Senate Bill 55 establishes a **Rare Disease Advisory Council (RDAC)**, creating a platform to address concerns and a foundation for further innovation to create treatments and improve services

As a nurse, the health and well-being of Delawareans and their families has always been a top priority of mine. That's why I worked with Senator Nicole Poore and Rep. Krista Griffith to lead efforts on the passage of **SB 55**, which creates Delaware's First Rare Disease Advisory Council. The council will spark further innovative treatments and research and help identify and address barriers to care for those suffering from one of the nearly 7,000 rare diseases.

No family should have to face this battle alone. This bill ensures that patients, caregivers, and families have a critical resource to improve their quality of care and quality of life.

[Learn More
Here](#)

Protecting Our Communities



Too many Delaware families have to cope with the impacts of gun violence and gun suicide in their communities, often resulting in the loss of a loved one, a friend, coworker or neighbor. Last year Delaware made tremendous strides in strengthening our gun safety laws, but we can and must do more. This is a public health crisis--one that has to stop.

Last month, I joined elected officials and advocates to kick off Gun Violence Awareness Week to talk about how we can make our communities safer. It's also why I supported Senator Lockman's permit to purchase legislation SS 1 for SB 2. Introduced earlier this year, this legislation is designed to ensure firearms won't end up in the wrong hands, while protecting the rights of responsible gun owners.

I applaud Governor Carney, Senate President Sokola, and our newly elected Speaker of the House Valerie Longhurst for committing to pass permit to purchase legislation at the beginning of next session, helping to reduce gun suicides and protect our communities from gun violence.

Funding for Early Learners with Disabilities



Lieutenant Governor Hall-Long joins Governor Carney, legislative sponsors, and advocates for the bill signing of HB 33, which will increase funding for preschool students with disabilities

Ensuring that all of Delaware's youngest learners have what they need to achieve success in school and in life is critical to the success of our state.

Thanks to the leadership of Representative Kim Williams, and the passage of HS 1 for HB 33, preschool students with disabilities now have additional

funding that will foster growth and improve outcomes. This legislation lowers student-teacher ratios for preschool special education students, giving them the ability to thrive in the classroom. Thank you to the advocates and legislative sponsors that helped make this concept a reality.

History In the House



For the first time in Delaware history, Delaware has an all-female leadership team in the House of Representatives!

Last week, Rep. Valerie Longhurst was elected as Delaware's first ever woman Speaker. I've had the honor of working with Speaker Longhurst over the years, and know her passion for uplifting women, improving access to quality mental health care, and tirelessly serving her community. I also congratulate Rep. Melissa Minor-Brown, Delaware's first Black Majority Leader in the House and Rep. Kerri Evelyn Harris, who is the first openly LGBTQ member of legislative leadership.

I also want to thank Rep. Pete Schwartzkopf for his years of service as Speaker. The people of Delaware and the people of Sussex County are fortunate that he is continuing his service in the House of Representatives.

I look forward to working alongside these talented leaders and all of you to ensure every Delawarean thrives.



Have questions or concerns?

Contact the Lt. Governor's Office



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