

JEANNIE HADDAWAY-RICCIO  
*Legislative District 37B*  
Caroline, Dorchester, Talbot,  
and Wicomico Counties

—  
ASSISTANT MINORITY WHIP

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Chair, Talbot County Delegation

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Economic Matters Committee

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Joint Committee on Federal Relations

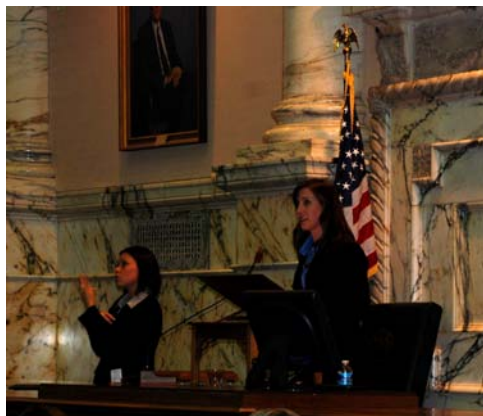


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## Legislative Wrap Up February 19, 2010



### *Lincoln Day Address*

Delegate Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio was selected to give this year's Lincoln Day Address to the Maryland House of Delegates. The speech was delivered on the House floor Monday evening. In celebrating the life and times of President Abraham Lincoln, Delegate Haddaway-Riccio focused on two significant journeys in his life and his commitment to the Constitution. After receiving a standing ovation, Delegate Tony O'Donnell the House Minority Leader made a motion that her remarks be journalized. The motion was adopted unanimously and her remarks will become part of the permanent historic record of the Maryland House of Delegates.

### *Health Insurance Discounts*

Last year, the Maryland General Assembly passed legislation that allowed health insurance companies to offer incentives to customers participating in a bona fide wellness program. Delegate Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio has introduced legislation this year that would build on that new law. House Bill 416 would specify that membership and routine exercise at a health club or fitness center would qualify as a bona fide wellness program. Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey have similar laws. A hearing on the bill was held on Thursday in the Health and Government Operations Committee. Lori Wilson-Clarke, a Talbot County resident and owner of Body Watts, attended the hearing and testified in favor.

## ***Offshore Wind***

This week Delegate Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio and other members of the House Economic Matters Committee held a hearing on a bill related to off-shore wind energy. A 600-MW facility is being developed in Delaware by Bluewater Wind and the company is interested in developing offshore wind on Maryland's Eastern Shore as well.

Since a project of this type has never been proposed before, there is uncertainty in Maryland's laws and regulations about the process for citing this type of generation. House Bill 468 would provide regulatory clarity by specifying that a certificate of public convenience and necessity (CPCN) be obtained from the Public Service Commission (PSC). The CPCN process is already required for other types of new generation and reviews environmental impacts, input from stakeholders and whether or not the project is needed.

## ***Credit History as Condition of Employment***

House Bill 175 is currently being reviewed by the House Economic Matters Committee and would prohibit an employer from using an individual's credit history as a basis to deny employment. Current federal law, called the Fair Credit Reporting Act, regulates the use of credit history as part of employment-related background checks and sets out guidelines for how the information can be obtained and used. The proposed Maryland law would prevent the use of credit history altogether unless an employer can demonstrate a "bona fide work-related purpose" for the information. The Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation would be required to adopt regulations that would define "bona fide work-related purpose".

Some industries, such as the financial industry and homeland security industry, use the information to verify whether a potential employee can obtain security clearances. It is also used to protect against fraud and theft. Over thirty witnesses testified on the bill including the Maryland Chamber of Commerce, the Job Opportunities Task Force, the Consumer Data Industry Association and the Society for Human Resource Management.