

# Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry – Weekly Update

During the legislative session, the TUUC Social Action Committee will provide updates on the status of our legislative priorities and tips for how you can get involved.

## What’s happening?

The following four bills passed one chamber (e.g., Senate or House) and have been referred to committees in the other chamber for consideration. Please contact the members of the appropriate committee to support the bills.

Status	Committee	Bill Number(s)	Bill Title	Bill Summary
The bill passed the Senate is now awaiting a hearing in the House.	Senate Education, Energy, & the Environment	<a href="#">HB0024</a>	Department of the Environment - Environmental Justice Evaluation of Environmental Permit Applications	Requiring the Department of the Environment to conduct a climate and environmental equity evaluation regarding the impact of issuing an approval for certain environmental permits; requiring the Department to provide opportunities for residents of the State to opt in to text, phone, e-mail, or regular mail notifications regarding any facility with a pending or final permit approval in or adjacent to the resident's census tract; altering certain reporting requirements for certain State agencies; etc.
The bill passed the Senate is now awaiting a hearing in the House.	Senate Finance	<a href="#">HB0728</a>	Health Insurance - Qualified Resident Enrollment Program (Access to Care Act)	Requiring the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange to establish and implement the Qualified Resident Enrollment Program to facilitate the enrollment of qualified residents in qualified plans; providing

				that the operation and administration of the Program may include functions delegated by the Exchange to a third party; and providing that the implementation of the Program is contingent on approval of a certain waiver application amendment.
<p>The bill passed the Senate is now in the House.</p> <p>The bill will be heard in committee on 4/1 @ 1:00 pm</p>	<p>House Judiciary</p> <p>House Health &amp; Government Operations</p>	<a href="#">SB0134</a>	Office of the Correctional Ombudsman - Establishment and Funding	Establishing the Correctional Ombudsman Unit in the Office of the Attorney General; requiring the Unit to conduct investigations, reviews, and assessments of administrative acts taken by the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services or in relation to individuals confined by the Department; requiring the Unit to refer matters for criminal charges or disciplinary proceedings as appropriate; establishing the Correctional Ombudsman Advisory Board; etc.
<p>The bill passed the Senate is now in the House.</p> <p>Committee Hearing on 3/27 @ 1:00 pm</p>	House Judiciary	<a href="#">HB0488</a>	Civil Actions - Public Nuisances - Firearm Industry Members (Gun Industry Accountability Act of 2024)	Prohibiting firearm industry members from knowingly creating, maintaining, or contributing to a public nuisance through the sale, manufacture, distribution, importation, or marketing of a firearm-related product under certain circumstances; requiring a firearm industry member

				to establish and implement certain reasonable controls regarding the sale, manufacture, distribution, importation, marketing, possession, or use of certain firearm-related products; authorizing certain civil actions for violations of the Act; etc.
Favorable Report by Health and Government Operations on 3/25 so this bill is heading to the full House. Call your Delegate and urge them to vote yes on Third Reader.	No longer in committee	<a href="#">SB0705</a>	Health Insurance - Qualified Resident Enrollment Program (Access to Care Act)	Requiring the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange to establish and implement the Qualified Resident Enrollment Program to facilitate the enrollment of qualified residents in qualified plans; providing that the operation and administration of the Program may include functions delegated by the Maryland Exchange to a third party; and providing that the implementation of the Program is contingent on approval of a certain waiver application amendment.

## What can you do?

- **Contact your representative** - Don't know your representatives or their committee assignments? [Click here](#), select "Look Up", then select the name of your member. The search results will show their phone, email, and committee assignments.
- **Testify** – Anyone can offer testimony on a bill. You don't need to be a lawyer or lobbyist. You can offer both live and written testimony. Live testimony may be given in-person or via Zoom. Regardless of how you chose to testify, you must sign up [online](#) 1-2 days before the bill's hearing. The window to sign-up opens at 10am and closes at 6pm one (1) business day before Senate hearings and two (2) business days before House hearings. For more information about testifying, consult the guidelines for the [Senate](#) and [House](#).

- **Watch the hearing** - You can also [watch bill hearings](#) online in real time or after the hearing has taken place.

## More Information

To learn more about the Social Action Committee's legislative advocacy or to get involved, contact Thomas Higdon at [higdon.thomas@gmail.com](mailto:higdon.thomas@gmail.com) or 443-362-2764.