

# Legislative Update



## AIA Maryland 2026 Legislative Session Wrap-Up

*Final Weekly Update | Transitioning to Quarterly Updates*

What began as a relatively quiet election-year session quickly became one of the most policy-heavy sessions in recent years. Leadership changes, committee restructuring, and two dominant issues — **energy costs and the state budget** — shaped nearly every major legislative decision.

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### The FY2027 State Budget

Governor Wes Moore signed Maryland's **\$70.8 billion Fiscal Year 2027 budget** into law on April 8. It moved faster than any budget since 2020.

The final budget:

- Closes a projected **\$1.4 billion deficit**
- Leaves more than **\$250 million in surplus**
- Maintains over **\$2 billion in the rainy-day fund**

While the budget invests heavily in public safety, education, and housing, it also includes significant reductions:

- **\$127 million cut** from the Developmental Disabilities Administration
- **\$292 million reduction** from the Strategic Energy Investment Fund (SEIF)

For architects, this matters. Capital investments, school construction, housing development, energy programs, and infrastructure funding all flow through the budget.

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## The Utility Relief Act & Energy Package

The most significant policy debate of the session centered on electricity costs and rising energy demand. Lawmakers passed a sweeping **200-page Utility Relief Act** — the most comprehensive energy legislation in several years.

The legislation aims to reduce electricity bills by at least **\$150 annually** for the average household while addressing growing demand from large energy users.

Earlier House proposals included aggressive reforms such as:

- Banning forecast test years in rate-setting
- Changing natural gas hookup cost structures
- More direct regulatory intervention in utility pricing

The final compromise scaled back those provisions and instead focused on:

- Temporary pauses on certain cost adjustments
- Expanded regulatory studies
- Narrower rate-setting reforms
- State planning mechanisms for projected energy demand growth

One notable trade-off: reductions to the state's **emPOWER energy efficiency program**. While the intent is short-term rate relief, some advocates warn that reduced efficiency investments could increase long-term energy costs.

For architects and developers, energy policy directly impacts:

- Building electrification strategies
- Utility infrastructure readiness
- BEPS compliance pathways
- Project financing and operating cost projections

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## Affordable Housing & Land Use Reform

The Maryland Housing Certainty Act and Transit-Oriented Development reforms targeted zoning barriers and vesting rights, aiming to accelerate housing development particularly in high-demand corridors.

These measures affect fee timing, regulatory predictability, parking minimums, and state development authority near transit hubs.

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## Our Signature Bill (Briefly)

SB 653 / HB 1180 — State Board of Architects enforcement reform — is now on the Governor's desk. The Governor has 30 days to sign, veto, or allow it to become law without signature.

While important for licensure protection, the larger policy story of this session was budget stabilization and energy reform.

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### **What This Means for the Profession**

This session reshaped Maryland's fiscal posture and energy framework. Architects will feel the ripple effects in:

- Public project funding
- School construction priorities
- Housing incentives and zoning flexibility
- Energy modeling and compliance strategies
- Long-term building performance policy

AIA Maryland will continue monitoring regulatory implementation throughout the interim.

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This concludes our weekly legislative updates for the 2026 session. We will transition to quarterly updates through January unless urgent action is required.

**Thank you for staying engaged.**

AIA MARYLAND

# CANDIDATE CHAT

## AIA NATIONAL BOARD 2027

Hear directly from those running for AIA national leadership. Your voice shapes the future of the profession.

DATE

**May 12, 2026**

Tuesday

TIME

**4:00 PM EST**

Virtual event

PLATFORM

**Zoom**

Free to join

ZOOM LINK

[us06web.zoom.us/j/7178167281?pwd=t67IXdEGmqbfwtKepIo2qta2CK8J9L.1](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/7178167281?pwd=t67IXdEGmqbfwtKepIo2qta2CK8J9L.1)

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**JOIN ON ZOOM — MAY 12 · 4 PM EST**

#AIAMaryland · #AIANational2027 · #CandidateChat

Join us to speak with the AIA National Candidates - May 12 @ 4 pm.  
Zoom is open to every AIA member!

Zoom Info:

Topic: AIA Maryland Meet the Candidates Chat

Time: May 12, 2026 04:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85457909980?pwd=iqM6as0Lr6Gbosbu5PgUzlbi76LJez.](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85457909980?pwd=iqM6as0Lr6Gbosbu5PgUzlbi76LJez.1)

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Meeting ID: 854 5790 9980

Passcode: 733509

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**The Maryland Architects PAC Protects Architects' Careers.**

Founded in 1995, the Maryland Architects PAC partners with AIA Maryland to achieve legislative goals, aiding architects in electing supportive legislators. Financial contributions are vital for promoting Maryland architects' interests and enhancing the state's architectural practice.



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