

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
Senator Guy Guzzone, Chair
Senator Jim Rosapepe, Vice Chair

2024 Committee Witness Guidelines

Bill Hearings

- All bill hearings will take place in person in the committee room and will be streamed live via the Maryland General Assembly (MGA) website.
- The Committee traditionally hears bills on Wednesdays (Tuesdays and Thursdays as needed) beginning at 1:00 p.m.
- All scheduled bill hearings will be posted in the MGA hearing schedule. Please check the schedule periodically for the most up-to-date information.
- The bill order will be posted in the MGA hearing schedule by 12:00 p.m. on the day of the scheduled bill hearings. The chair will also announce the bill order at the beginning of each bill hearing.
- **To register to provide oral testimony or submit written testimony, individuals MUST create a MyMGA account through the MGA website. [Click here for a tutorial.](#)**
 - Please note, the MGA website does not support internet explorer. Please use another web browser to upload your written testimony.
- Oral testimony sign-up and written testimony submission will open one (1) business day in advance of the scheduled bill hearing and will be open from 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Signup for Oral/and or Written Testimony Upload Timeline

	<u>Monday Hearing</u>	<u>Tuesday Hearing</u>	<u>Wednesday Hearing</u>	<u>Thursday Hearing</u>	<u>Friday Hearing</u>
Oral Witness Signup & Written Testimony Submission	Friday 8am – 6pm	Monday 8am – 6pm	Tuesday 8am – 6pm	Wednesday 8am – 6pm	Thursday 8am – 6pm

Oral Testimony

- While witnesses are strongly encouraged to provide in-person oral testimony, to include as many citizens as possible in the legislative process, **up to 14** members of the public may provide virtual oral testimony via Zoom per bill.
- Witnesses must designate whether they will testify in person or by Zoom. Witnesses may **not** change their oral testimony designation (virtual or in-person) after the sign-up system closes, even if they are not selected for virtual testimony.
- Witness testimony via pre-recorded video will not be allowed.
- Late witness sign-up will not be allowed.
- Witness testimony will be timed. Witnesses should plan to conclude their testimony at the two-minute (2:00) mark, but the allotted time will be at the discretion of the chair based on the number of witnesses signed up.
- Witnesses who provide in-person oral testimony will be called to testify before witnesses providing testimony via Zoom. Any changes to this format will be at the discretion of the chair.
- If you plan to use an audio-visual presentation during your **in-person oral testimony**, you must contact the Committee Manager in advance of the hearing. All audio-visual presentations must be received by the Committee Manager by **6:00 PM the day before the hearing**. Witnesses are strongly encouraged to upload the presentation as written testimony through the witness sign-up system. Any audio-visual presentation will be counted against the two-minute time limit applicable to each witness's testimony. **Witnesses providing testimony via Zoom will not be permitted to show an audio-visual presentation during their testimony.**
- Typically, committee members will ask questions after the conclusion of a witness's testimony. However, any changes to this format are at the discretion of the committee chair.

Zoom Instructions

- Zoom links will **ONLY** be sent to witnesses selected to testify who chose "virtual oral" or "virtual both" when they signed up to testify on a bill.
- Zoom links will be sent from noreply@mlis.state.md.us by 12:00 p.m. on the day of the scheduled bill hearing.
- If a witness is NOT selected to testify, the witness will receive an email from noreply@mlis.state.md.us to inform them they were not selected.
- **The Zoom link is confidential and should not be shared.**

- Witnesses must log into Zoom with their first and last names, so committee staff are able to quickly identify the user and admit them into the meeting at the appropriate time. Witnesses who do not log into Zoom with their first and last name may miss their opportunity to testify.
- Zoom witnesses should follow the hearings via the MGA website to know when the bill they are testifying on is going to be called by the chair and should log into Zoom when the bill before their bill is called.
- When testifying, witnesses must have their camera on.
- After the chair indicates that there are no further questions, the witness should exit the Zoom meeting, or they will be logged out by committee staff.

Written Testimony

- Any written testimony submitted to the committee is public testimony and therefore accessible to the public and cannot be removed.
- Written testimony MUST be in a PDF format to be uploaded.
- Late testimony will be accepted as part of the Committee's public file but will not be available to members during the bill hearing. Please reach out to the committee on how to submit late testimony.

Accommodations

- For Americans with Disabilities Act requests, please contact the committee directly.
- For an MGA sign language interpretation request, please request sign language interpretation at least 5 – 7 businesses days in advance of the event by filling out the following form: [Request Sign Language Interpretation Form](#). The committee will attempt to arrange interpreters on shorter notice but cannot guarantee availability; interpreters are not generally available on an emergency or short-notice basis.

Voting

- The committee voting schedule is at the discretion of the chair and will depend on the committee's workload.
- Voting sessions and voting lists will be available in the MGA hearing schedule 24 hours in advance of a voting session when feasible.

- All voting sessions will be live streamed via the MGA website.
- The outcome of a voting session will be published in the MGA hearing schedule within 24 hours after a voting session and on the bill page on the MGA website after the committee reports out.

Public Bill Files

- The public can request an electronic copy of a public bill file by emailing the committee at AA_BAT@mlis.state.md.us .
 - ❖ Witness testimony and the oral witness list will be available the day after the bill is heard in committee.
 - ❖ Any additional materials will be available after the bill passes 3rd reader on the Senate floor.
- Written testimony will also be available through the MGA website when the bill is on the Senate floor for 2nd reader. For bills that do not pass out of a committee, written testimony will be available on the MGA website after the legislative session.
- For bill files that are not available on the MGA website, please contact the Department of Legislative Services Library at 410-946-5400.

General Policy and Procedures

- Late filed Senate bills will be sponsor only and may not be heard before crossover.
- **House Bills:**
 - ❖ Exact cross-filed bills will be **Sponsor Only**.

Please check the hearing schedule on the Committees' webpage as there may be changes.

For questions, please contact the Committee Manager, Kimberly Landry at 410.841.3690 or at kim.landry@mlis.state.md.us.

Budget Hearings

Budget Hearings are in-person ONLY.

In order for the **public** to provide oral and/or submit written testimony, individuals **MUST** create a MyMGA account through the MGA website. [Click here for a tutorial](#)

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- Operating budget hearings will be heard at 1:00pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. Friday budget hearings will begin at 11:30am or immediately following session. Capital subcommittee hearings will be on Tuesdays following full committee hearings (approximately 2:00pm). However, please check the hearing schedule on the committees' webpage as there may be changes.
- The budget hearing order is usually scheduled in advance by staff. However, the subcommittee chair may change the order of the hearing to accommodate department secretaries or agency personnel.

For questions, please contact the Committee Manager, Kimberly Landry at 410.841.3690 or at kim.landry@mlis.state.md.us.