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Baltimore Afro-American

WE ARE NOW IN OUR 91ST YEAR

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Legislative Roundup

As the 1983 session of the General Assembly winds down there is a great flurry of activity to complete action on the legislation that is still pending. This is a summary of bills that are yet to see action.

BUDGETS AND BONDS

The Senate Budget and Taxation Committee is considering about seventy construction bond bills including the House version of the Capital Budget, HB211.

The bill includes $8.8 million for construction of a science complex at Morgan State University. According to Delegate Pete Rawlings, the House passed most of the bond bills which were important to the Legislative Black Caucus.

A house and senate conference committee is developing a final version of the State Operating Budget, HB210. Each body passed its own version of HB210 earlier this session.

SOCIAL CONCERNS

An $8 million targeted aid bill for Maryland public schools

Continued on page 2

AFRO photo by P. A. Greene

MAKING PRETTY for the Easter Season are Mrs. Arlene Parker and her daughter, Maheba, from Wilmington, Del. They tried on holiday fashions when they visited city relatives this week.

Redistricting bill on mayor's desk:

Measure not signed prompts council action

By Martin Evans
AFRO Staff Writer

The city's redistricting plan, thought to have been settled by a vote last Thursday, was re-opened with a letter from City Council Judiciary Committee chairman Frank Gallagher.

The letter circulated among councilmembers Wednesday afternoon, solicited support to have the adopted plan recalled from the mayor's desk to allow several popular amendments to be added at a special session Monday.

The redistricting plan approved last week by a slim one vote margin is seen as a victory for the city's black voters. But key figures in the redistricting including Kweisi Mfume (4th district) and Nathaniel McFadden (2nd district) said the recall threatens to kill the plan.

The amendments addressed concerns expressed by several civic groups to unite sections of Hampden, Resevoir Hill and other neighborhoods.

The popular amendments were excluded because several councilmembers feared the amendments would fatally delay the bill, and would result in the adoption of the mayor's plan.

It was for this reason that several councilpersons have balked at the Gallagher letter.

Although only 10 votes are required to recall the redistricting plan from the mayor's desk, 15 votes are needed for final passage of an amended bill. If the council fails to adopt its own plan by Monday, the Mayor's plan will go into effect.

Some councilpersons feared that with no tomorrow to save them the bill would be recalled and amended, only to be killed by an eleventh-hour defection.

Although the Gallagher letter resembles a binding contract, there is in fact nothing to prevent signees from withdrawing their support of the package at any time, doubting members said.

Second district councilwoman Mary Pat Clarke, a member of

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City gets money to rebuild projects

By Johnnie Brown
AFRO Staff Writer

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), has awarded more than $2 million in urban development action grants for the construction of several subsidized apartment projects in the city.

Approximately $300,000 of the total grant will be used to assist the St. Ambrose Housing Center finance the renovation of the historic St. Martin's School in the Franklin Square neighborhood.

The Housing Center plans 28 low income apartments in the old school that was according to its parish priest erected in 1865.

During its 118 years in existence, St. Martin's has housed an elementary school and an high school. Father John Harvey told the AFRO, the high school has been vacant since 1965 and the grade school is currently used for city jail work release programs and for child day care.

"We are hoping for 29 apartments and we are very pleased to have the grants. There is a need in this area to put buildings to use," added Father John.

The total construction of the church and school will provide 20 construction jobs, and will gain a $14,000 property tax increase for the city.

The Upton area was awarded $367,500 for the construction of 30 new townhouses for moderate income households. The urban development action grants will be used as a second mortgage by perspective buyers.

As a result of this upcoming project, 28 construction jobs will be created and will complement other ongoing community related activities in the Pennsylvania Avenue corridor.

Lena Boone, president of the Upton Planning Committee, told

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OLD BAY COLLEGE will be converted into 98 apartments.

Douglass will challenge Hyman Pressman again

By Martin Evans
AFRO Staff Writer

State Representitive John W. Douglass (D-45) said Wednesday he intends to stress jobs and economic development in a campaign to unseat 20-year encumbent Hyman Pressman for the city's Comptroller's office this fall.

The Eastside Democrat said the city needs a change of course, and that if elected he would use the comptroller's influence on the board of Estimates to further black access to city contract dollars.

"I think black businessmen and black contractors ought to benefit more from city contracts. I think there are things we can do to encourage black contractors where now there are none. I think we can talk about setting up consortiums to handle the big contracts," Douglass said while discussing his campaign focus.

Contacted at his office Thursday afternoon, Pressman declined to comment on Douglass' qualifications as a candidate

But Pressman said he will run again, and will base his campaign on a record of "good service" and "experience."

Pressman said also he is confident he has done "all I can" to promote economic development in the black community.

"As a member of the board of Estimates I have done all I can. I think the Administration has done all it can do. It's unfortunate that the Federal government has stymied their efforts," said of his

Continued on page 2

TO RUN AGAIN — John W. Douglass said he will campaign to win the comptrollership from incumbent Hyman Pressman. Douglass, who currently represents the 45th district in Annapolis, challenged Pressman in 1975 and 1979.

NEWS FOCUS

BG&E to start turnoffs

Beginning Friday, 48,000 Baltimore Gas and Electric customers will lose their service if they have not paid past due bills. Most of the 48,000 are three months or more behind.

The total cost of the bill is well over 16.6 million dollars or, in essence, $342 per customer.

Baltimore Gas and Electric is encouraging its customers to pay their past bills and to avoid going through service denial.

The company is willing to set up negotiation plans allowing customers to Pay 25 percent down and Pay the balance in portions throughout a six-month period.

"Most people are behind because they believe their service will not be denied over the winter," says Mary Franz, media relations representative for BG&E. "Most people just don't think of the bill as a priority," says Ms. Franz.

MTA hikes bus fares

Mass Transit Administration at a press conference Wednesday announced a proposal to raise the bus fare from 60 to 75 cents. Fare for senior citizens and the handicapped will increase a nickel.

Dave Wagner, MTA administrator, said if the proposed fare hike is approved, it will take effect June 5.

"We expect an 8 percent loss of ridership if the hike is approved; however, we intend to balance things out by producing better bus service," says Mr. Wagner.

The MTA proposed to raise fares due to a state law that requires the MTA to collect 50 percent of its operating cost through bus fares. Since only 43 percent of the costs are paid by passengers, the MTA was forced to either reduce bus service or increase the cost.

After a check into other transportation, the AFRO found that no other hikes are expected. The subway will be the same fare as the bus.

Mr. Tom Lovelace, director of transportation for Baltimore City Public Service Commission, says no hikes in taxi fares are planned.

Redistricting: 'And the winners are...'

With the Academy Awards presentations just around the corner, it seems appropriate to grant awards for the best performances in the redistricting drama played out in the Baltimore City Council last week.

For those of you who can not take the suspense the winners are: The Black Community; Council members DiPietro, Schaefer, Clarke, McFadden, Murphy and Di Blasi; and Council President Burns, Kweisi Mfume and Michael Mitchell.

The envelopes please.

Best Psychological Boost To Political Aspirations:

The black Community of Baltimore City most particularly the black residents of the Third, Fifth and Sixth Districts. In each of these Districts the plan adopted by the Council Coalition resulted in either the maintenance or shift of precincts which were deemed to be beneficial to the election of black councilmanic candidates. As a result of the adoption of the coalition's redistricting plan there is a feeling that black candidates have not been "officially" excluded from competition for seats on the council.

Best Supporting Role In The Passage of the Coalition's Redistricting Plan:

Councilmen Dominic "Mimi" DePietro and John Schaefer, for their recognition of what was in the best interest of their own districts, and their willingness to coglesce with other council members to achieve their desired goals. To Councilwoman Mary Pat Clarke, for recognition of

Continued on page 2

CCB embezzler gets three years

By Pam Widgeon
AFRO Staff Writer

She showed no emotions after pleading guilty to stealing $388,000 from Community College of Baltimore.

Judge Edgar P. Silver sentence Ms. Marian White on March 31 to 10 years in prison, seven of which were suspended. He told the defendant after serving her three year sentence she will be on probation for five years and must pay the state $5,000 in restitution.

Ms. White, a former assistant supervisor in the accounting department took the money from a college tuition reimbursement fund over a period of 2 ½ years. She withdrew the money from a fund used to make refunds to students who registered for CCB courses, but later dropped them.

The state recommended that Ms. White be sentenced to seven years for the white collar crime.

However, Judge Silver told the court, "I don't believe the amount of years should be given because of an isolated crime. She must suffer the consequences.

The judge said he considers three years a "severe punishment." Assistant State's Attorney Dario J. Broccolino said the plea was results of plea negotation. He told the court, "She was a trusted employee. She had no regard for anyone else other than herself.

"She was stealing money in order to have some necessities in life." Broccolino told the AFRO none of the money has been

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