



Montgomery County *Commission for Women*



Sheila Hixon

SHEILA ELLIS HIXSON, Delegate from the 20th Legislative District of Montgomery County, Maryland, is Chair Emeritus of the Ways and Means Committee in the Maryland General Assembly. Delegate Hixson was appointed in 1993 and is the first woman to serve in this position.

Delegate Hixson currently serves on the following committees and commissions: Commission on Education Finance, Equity and Excellence; the Fiscal Leaders Group, Commission to Study Ways to Improve Financial Viability in the Horse Racing Industry, House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee, Joint Legislative Policy Committee, Joint Spending Affordability Committee, Legislative Management Subcommittee of the Policy Committee, Commission on Transportation Investment and the Task Force to Study Retail Electric Competition and the Restructuring of the Electric Utility Industry. She also serves on the National Conference of State Legislators – ASI Fiscal Oversight & Intergovernmental Affairs Committee and the Southern Legislative Conference Fiscal Affairs & Government Operations Committee.

Delegate Hixson served as a member of the House of Delegates since 1976. Her first assignment was on the Environmental Matters Committee, followed by the Ways and Means Committee. Delegate Hixson is past Chairperson of the Federal Relations

Committee and served as President of the Women Legislators of Maryland in 1992-1993. Prior to serving in the Maryland General Assembly, she was a member of the Montgomery County Democratic Central Committee. At the outset of her career, Delegate Hixson was an educator in the Head Start Program.

Delegate Hixson's personal legislative endeavors include statutes relating to civil rights, child abuse, education, domestic violence, sexual harassment, the elderly, the environment, social and health issues.

While chairperson of the House Ways and Means Committee, the Delegate worked to improve taxation measures, education and revenue enhancements for the State of Maryland. Former Chairperson Hixson sponsored or cosponsored legislation to significantly benefit Maryland's citizens and businesses. She worked successfully to pass a series of tax measures, including a property tax bill to allow for semi-annual payment; a One Maryland Program to extend tax credits for businesses that establish or expand businesses in distressed counties; and tax credits in other geographical areas to provide incentives to retain or attract significant private investment and the Utilities Deregulation bill that will enable Marylanders to choose their own power company. There is a mandated rate reduction for Maryland residential homeowners to protect consumers for unintended rate increases. The Delegate also cosponsored the tobacco tax bill that provided an increase to discourage young people from purchasing cigarettes and other related products.

The Delegate's work on legislation to provide for improvements in education included the Quality Teacher Incentive Act of 1999 designed to attract and retain quality teachers in the State as well as numerous scholarship programs. Other noteworthy measures include the following: the Libraries Funding bill that established a consistent mechanism to support the State Library Resource Center; an Instructional Materials for Blind Students bill to develop procedures to coordinate statewide availability of pupil edition textbooks in Braille; the English for Speakers of the Other Language bill to continue to fund programs at Community colleges at an appropriate level; a Universal Newborn Hearing Screening bill which extends the existing child wellness mandated benefits to include routine newborn hearing screening before discharge from the hospital of all newborns.

Delegate Hixson has received numerous awards including Legislator of the Year from the AFL-CIO of Maryland Building and Construction Trades Council; Distinguished Service Citation from the Maryland Library Association; Outstanding Leadership Award from the Women Legislators of Maryland; Recognition Award from the Maryland Association of Counties (MACO); and awards of appreciation from the following: Jubilee Association of Maryland, Inc; Adventist Health Care; Maryland Underage Drinking Prevention Association; Fraternal Order of Police; MD State Lodge and Maryland Association of Psychiatric Support Services.

Delegate Hixson graduated from Northern State Teacher's College in Michigan. She resides in Silver Spring.