

“Celebrate Independence Day in Dover. See the full Schedule of events! Pages 1 & 2

DOVER DISPATCH

FREE



June-July 2024 A Newspaper for Everyone in Our Community Print Edition

Our Pending Financial Crisis

How Can We Fund More Education, Health Care, Food & Housing as Our Economy Declines?



State Budget Growing!



State Revenues Slowing!

Grow the Economy?
Or
Increase Taxes?
Or
Try Common Sense?

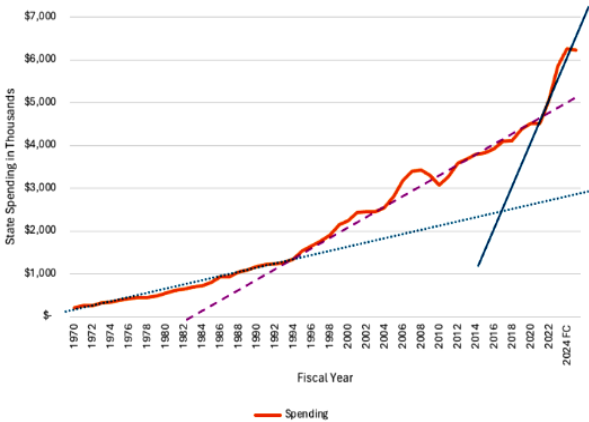
Record Increases in Spending Continue as State Revenues Slow!

The Delaware State Budget growing and growing!

- Pete duPont Trend (1970-1994):** Trend: Had this continued, the 2024 budget would be \$3 billion, half the current \$6 billion, implying greater wealth for Delawareans.
- Tom Carper Trend (1994-2019):** Under Governor Tom Carper, spending increased 60% faster due to new unclaimed property and gambling revenues. This would result in a 2024 budget of \$5 billion.
- John Carney Trend:** Beginning in 2021, federal aid during the pandemic increased the budget by \$1 billion above the Carper trend, a 20% rise.

The current state government is spending more and growing at a faster rate than ever before. The state is already the largest employer and the new proposal to spend more keep coming. How do we ensure quality of life in Delaware and balance the budget?

GRAPH 1: Delaware's Spending Trend (1970-2024)



(Sources: Delaware Finance Office. (2023). Fiscal Notebook: Section 3 [PDF document])

What Happens As The Economy Slows?

Delaware's Economy Shrinks in 2023: Only State with lower GDP than the previous year.

DOVER, DE: In 2022, Delaware's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) reached approximately \$75.17⁵ billion. However, 2023 saw a slight decline, with the state's real GDP dropping to \$74.26 billion. This decrease in economic output marks a slower growth rate compared to the overall U.S. average during the same period. Delaware was the only state to show a decline in GDP over the period.

When compared to neighboring states such as Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, Delaware's economic performance appears relatively modest. While the national economy has shown resilience and growth, Delaware's economic indicators suggest a need for revitalized strategies to boost local industry and business environments.

The state's modest economic performance highlights potential areas for development and investment to ensure future growth aligns more closely with regional and national trends. As Delaware moves forward, addressing these economic challenges will be crucial for sustaining and enhancing the state's economic well-being.

Additionally, the slowing state revenue growth, attributed to the underperformance of Delaware's economy, is expected to impact future state budgets. This financial constraint underscores the urgency for proactive measures to stimulate economic activity and secure the state's fiscal health. Addressing these economic challenges will be crucial for sustaining and enhancing Delaware's economic well-being.

Lots of \$\$ Priorities!

40%¹
of the state budget allocated to Health Care and growing!



15,000
affordable houses needed; 2X what we have now!



+\$3000
More Per Student called for by Governor Candidate. It's \$2B now.



421³
Charging Stations in Delaware for 445,444 vehicles. We need more!



54,234²
New Students as LT Candidate proposes Early Child care for all working moms.



15,715
State Employees want higher wages & more benefits.



Celebrating Independence: A Guide to Dover's July 4th Festivities

Schedule of Events for Thursday, July 4, 2024

10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. - First State Heritage Park
FSHP is bringing you a series of FREE programs and activities throughout the day that revive the simple pleasures of times gone by. From the John Bell House (43 The Green), take a Revolutionary Dover walking tour on the hour from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and relive the drama of America's stunning birth or enjoy colonial pastimes in the yard. Meanwhile, at Legislative Hall—Delaware's regal seat of government—guided tours will be available, also from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. - The Biggs Museum
Celebrate the 4th of July at The Biggs with free admission all day. Showcasing the best of American art from the Mid-Atlantic region, spanning from the 1700s to today. Explore a diverse collection of paintings, sculptures, furniture, silver, and more. In addition to the permanent collection, visitors can enjoy two special exhibitions: Rebecca Raubacher's Horses &



Continued on Page 2



A Celebration of Independence in the Capital of the First State
Thursday, July 4, 2024

Join us in beautiful downtown Dover as we celebrate Independence Day!

Celebrating Independence: A Guide to Dover's July 4th Festivities

Continued from page 1
Other Creatures, and Award Winners XXIV featuring the Delaware Division of Arts Fellowship Recipients for 2024. Families are encouraged to visit between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. to create festive art projects.

10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. - The Old State House
Open for tours. Admission is free. Address: The Old State House, 25 The Green, Dover DE 19904. Tours will be available from 10 a.m. to 12 pm; 1 p.m. to 1:45 p.m. and 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. The building will be closed from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m. and 1:45 p.m. to 3 p.m. for reading of the Declaration of Independence at 2 p.m.
2:00 p.m. - The Old State House Reading of the Declaration of Independence. Program commences with the ringing of The Old State House bell in celebration of the nation's birthday, followed immediately by historical interpreters, dressed in period clothing, reciting the Declaration of Independence outside near the spot where the document



was first read to the citizens of Dover in 1776.
4:00 p.m. to 8:45 p.m. - Music and Vendors around Legislative Mall
Enjoy a meal or treat from the food vendors and peruse the craft booths on the streets surrounding Legislative Mall (some vendors may open earlier than 4:00 p.m.) DJ Giz (aka Shawn Fulton) playing your favorite hits all afternoon leading up to the fireworks!
6:00 p.m. - Parade.
Organized by the American Legion Walter L. Fox Post No. 2. The parade begins at Hazel Street, heads south on State Street, and ends at

Water Street. Enjoy floats, fire trucks, marchers, antique and classic cars in an old-fashioned patriotic parade. For 2024: Featuring the United States Army Marching Band!
7:00 p.m. - Legislative Hall [Tentative] After the parade, come down to Legislative Hall to watch an old-fashioned Peach Pie Eating Contest sponsored by Fifer Orchards. Did you know: Delaware's state flower is the Peach Blossom, and at one time Delaware was one of the top peach producing states in the country!
8:00 p.m. - Opening Ceremony at Legislative Hall
Remarks from the Dover's mayor and recognition of our generous sponsors.
9:15 - Fireworks!!
Watch the skies light up over Legislative Mall with a grand fireworks display by Brothers Pyro Fireworks.

Community Poll: What do we do about the Budget?

In an recent online survey, Delawareans sent a message to candidates running for office:

When the State Collects More Money than it needs, the State Should?
29% Spend it. We have people in need.
12%% Save it. We will need it in the future.
59% Give it back to the Taxpayers.

Government is Growing....
68% Too fast. Quality of Life is declining.
32% Too Slow. The More Government is better.

What Do We Need More of...
33% Government Programs and Bureaucrats
11% New Taxes to fund more programs.
24% Self-Reliant People
32% Common Sense People with New Solutions.

An Online Survey of 250 Delaware voters between May 29 and June 12th.

Celebrating Culture and Community at Positively Dover

DOVER, DE: The city of Dover is gearing up for its 34th annual Positively Dover African American Festival, set to take place on June 22 at the Legislative Mall. This event, a cornerstone

of community celebration and cultural pride, has been a staple in Dover's calendar since its inception by local advocacy legend Reuben Salters. The festival is more than just a day of fun; it's a vibrant expression of the rich tapestry of African American culture and history. Visitors can expect a grand procession featuring dignitaries and guests dressed in traditional African attire, accompanied by the rhythmic beats of the Sankofa Drummers and the graceful movements of the Sankofa Dancers. The festival promises a family-friendly atmosphere filled with music that echoes the soulful sounds of Motown, alongside a variety of food vendors, entertainment, and educational booths. From voter registration drives to robotics displays, the festival offers something for



everyone, embodying the spirit of fellowship and American diversity. One of the highlights of this year's event is the emphasis on health and wellness, with free health screenings available to attendees. This initiative reflects the festival's commitment to not only celebrating culture but also promoting the well-being of the community. The Positively Dover African American Festival is a testament to the power of unity and the importance of understanding and sharing cultures. It's a free event that invites all

to partake in the joy and learn more about the contributions of African Americans to the nation's fabric. For those interested in the arts, the Biggs Museum of American Art will also offer complimentary admission, providing an opportunity to explore American art in a broader context. As Mr. Salters aptly puts it, the festival has grown "tremendously" over the years, attracting businesses and visitors from around the world to Dover. It sets an example for the country, showcasing how a community can come together to celebrate and share their herit-



age. The Positively Dover African American Festival is not just an event; it's a movement that continues to 'rock' Dover with its message of unity and cultural celebration.

About This Paper

For more information about this publication, please feel free to call
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Note: this Newspaper was edited with the assistance of ChatGPT.



“Pending Financial Crisis” is an Opportunity for Common Sense

By Rep. Michael Ramone
Candidate for Governor of Delaware

The Delaware State Budget has seen unprecedented growth in recent years. This money was to have solved our states most pressing problems. Instead, we not only don't solve the current problems, thing got worse in our State. And, now we are looking to start new State Government programs to address new problems we created or never solved.


As we watch young legislators promise more and more government solutions to their voters, we must also heed the warning signs on the horizon.

The growth in spending of our state government is not sustainable. We are on the cusp of a downturn in state revenue, a



looming reality that we cannot ignore. As we navigate this impending challenge, we must be prepared to face some very difficult trade-offs.

Healthcare, education, housing and essential services are critical programs. They are the sectors that directly impact the lives of our citizens and shape the future of our state. However, in the face of dwindling revenues, what do we cut first.



This is not a time for despair, but a call to action. It is a time for us to use common sense and think differently about solving our problems.

We must look beyond traditional big government solutions. We won't always have the money to spend on more new government. When the money runs out,

we can't just raise taxes. We can't collect more from business in taxes, or collect more from people who sell their homes. We should not make it more expensive to be a teacher and live in Delaware. Our kids won't come back home if the further destroy economic growth. If we blindly can push more of the burden on to businesses, because they will move or simply won't consider Delaware.

It's time to rethink the role of government in Delaware. We must use common sense approach to State Budgeting. We can't allow the Delaware economy to be the only one getting smaller.

We need to go back to basic economics, we need look at where regulations are more a burden and than a protection of the public. Perhaps we need less government mandates and more collaboration between the regulators, the public and business leaders.

Government has a role, but so does the private sector. State Government can't run the economy, decide what car you drive, who can open a new medical practice and run grocery stores in low income communities.

Expanding the State Government has not solved the education program: we still have 58% of public school students who can't read a grade level.

In conclusion, the growth of the Delaware State Budget and the pending revenue decline presents us with both opportunities and challenges. As we chart our course forward, we must strike a balance between leveraging our current growth and preparing for future uncertainties. It will not be an easy task, but with foresight, innovation, and a commitment to our citizens, we can ensure a sustainable future for Delaware.

News About Your Money!

Delaware Economy Shrinks, Only State with a lower GDP than last year!

WILMINGTON, DE: According to data compiled by Visual Capitalist and released in an infographic earlier this month, Delaware had the Lowest Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of any state in the nation in 2023. GDP is the total monetary value of all the finished goods and services produced within a particular jurisdiction over a specific period and functions as a broad measure of economic health. Visual Capitalist noted that "while the U.S. economy defied expectations in 2023, posting 2.5% in real GDP growth, several states lagged behind. Delaware witnessed the slowest growth in the country, with real GDP growth of -1.2% over the year, as a sluggish finance and insurance sector dampened the state's economy." Delaware was the only state posting a negative GDP growth rate. The First State's poor performance outpaced #2 on the list, Wisconsin, by more than a full percentage point.



Delaware's Healthcare Spending Exceeds National Average

DOVER, DE: Healthcare spending per capita in Delaware surpasses the national average, with costs consuming a significant portion of the state's budget—approximately 25% or \$1 billion in FY 2017. Medicaid costs and spending



growth outpace national averages. Demographics play a crucial role, with an aging population and higher rates of chronic disease exacerbated by social determinants like poverty and food scarcity. Despite high spending, Delaware's healthcare outcomes rank 31st nationally, with elevated rates of cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, infant mortality, and premature death. Healthcare infrastructure is concentrated, with six acute care hospital systems, leading to inefficiencies and inflated costs without commensurate health improvements.

Delaware House Minority Leader Proposes Income Tax Relief Bill

PIKE CREEK, DE: In a bid to provide relief to Delaware residents, House Minority Leader Mike Ramone has put forth a bill aimed at offering income tax relief. The proposal, if enacted, would bring significant changes to the state's tax structure. Ramone's bill seeks to replace the current six personal income tax brackets with three new brackets, along with raising the minimum income subject to tax. The anticipated tax savings under the proposal could reach up to 25% for some earners. Despite Ramone's argument that the bill could stimulate the economy, it faced obstacles in a Democrat-led committee in the state House. While acknowledging the need for modifications, Ramone clarified that he wouldn't push for a floor vote without necessary adjustments.



Senator Proposes Government-Run Grocery Stores to Combat Food Insecurity

WILMINGTON, DE, Delaware State Senator Darius Brown (d) introduces Senate Bill 254, proposing government-run grocery stores in Wilmington to address food insecurity. The Delaware Grocery Initiative aims to map food deserts and provide financial aid to various grocery store models, including for-profit, non-profit, cooperative, and government-run establishments. With 12.6% of Delaware's population, including nearly 20% of children, facing food insecurity, the initiative's \$500,000 operating budget signifies a vital investment in community welfare. As debates unfold, stakeholders anticipate potential transformations in Wilmington's food landscape, highlighting the broader fight against food insecurity statewide.

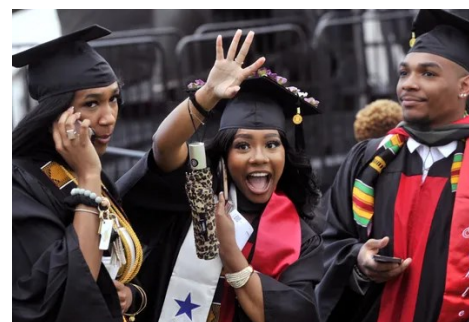


Delaware House Passes Bill to Subsidize Home EV Charger Installations

DOVER, DE: Delaware's House approved House Substitute 2 for House Bill 13, securing financial aid for residents to purchase and install home electric vehicle (EV) chargers. The bill, passed by a vote of 21 to 13, allocates assistance through the Delaware Sustainable Energy Utility (DSEU), funded by the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. Low-income applicants could receive up to 90% of the costs, while others could get up to 50%. However, details on eligibility criteria and funding allocation remain unclear. The measure heads to the Senate Environment, Energy & Transportation Committee for review.

Former Teacher Matt Meyer Unveils Ambitious Education Spend- ing Plan

NEW CASTLE, DE: Despite spending more than 41 other states per student, former public school teacher and leader of Delaware's largest local government, Matt Meyer, has unveiled a comprehensive 23-page education blueprint for the 2024 gubernatorial race to increase spending by over \$3000 per student. Crafted in collaboration with state educators, Meyer's plan addresses urgent education challenges in the state. In his plan: Matt Meyer aims to modernize the school funding formula, proposing an increase of \$3,400 to \$6,400 per pupil. He advocates for surpassing starting salaries in neighboring states to tackle the teacher shortage. Meyer pushes for universal pre-K access statewide and aims for grade-level reading proficiency by third grade for all children. Additionally, he guarantees higher education access for Delaware students.



Family and friends attend the commencement ceremony held on Friday May 10, 2024 for graduating students of Delaware State University. Photo- Delaware News Journal



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A graphic for Progress Paving & Sealcoating. It features a black banner with the word "PROGRESS" in white serif font. Below the banner, the words "PAVING & SEALCOATING" are written in blue sans-serif font. To the right of the banner is a blue square containing the BBB Accredited Business logo and an "A+" rating. Below this, the text "From driveways to parking lots, ProgressPaving and Sealcoating has been delivering superior asphalt and concrete in Delawarefor over" is written in black sans-serif font. At the bottom, the phone number "302-478-6295" is displayed in a large, bold, black serif font.



David Anderson
City Council Member
4th Rep District



Donyale Hall
Candidate
US Representative



Sarah McBride
Candidate for
US Representative



Ruth Briggs King
Candidate
Lt. Governor

People Making an Impact In Delaware!

- Congrats to Councilman David Anderson for his service to the community. Keep it up!
- Dover Community Activist is running for US. Rep against first time State Senator Sarah McBride. The race will get national attention as McBride seeks to be first transgender member of the US Congress.
- Ruth Briggs King joins Sherry Dorsey Walker, Kyle Evans Gay and Dr. Debbie Harrington as candidates for the Lt. Governor in 2024.

A Community Tradition:

Laps For Charity: A Day of Thrills for a Noble Cause



DOVER, DE: On July 20, 2024, the Dover Motor Speedway will transform into a hub of philanthropy and excitement with the Laps For Charity event. This unique opportunity allows participants to drive their personal vehicles on the famed Monster Mile, a track synonymous with NASCAR legends. The event promises an adrenaline rush, as drivers follow in the tire tracks of their motorsport heroes, all while contributing to a charitable cause.

For a donation of \$75, car enthusiasts can enjoy five laps around the track, led by an official Dover Motor Speedway pace vehicle. This experience not only offers the thrill of the race but also the satisfaction of knowing that the proceeds will support children in need. For those desiring exclusivity, an eight-lap VIP session was available for \$125, allowing drivers the rare chance to have the track to themselves. Although the VIP laps for July are sold out, hopeful participants can look forward to the next available session on September 14. The event is meticulously organized to

ensure safety and enjoyment for all. Drivers must be at least 16 years old with a valid driver's license and adhere to a set of rules designed to maintain the event's integrity and safety standards. These include signing an event waiver, wearing seatbelts, abstaining from alcohol, operating street-legal vehicles, and following the pace car's speed. Laps For Charity is more than just an event; it's a community gathering that brings together car clubs, families, and individuals for a day of fun and philanthropy. It's a testament to the power of community and the shared passion for motorsports and helping others. For those interested in participating or seeking more information, Gary Camp is

the point of contact, available at gcamp@dovermotorspeedway.com. Whether you're a seasoned driver or a newcomer to the track, Laps For Charity offers an unforgettable experience for a great cause. So, mark your calendars, start your engines, and get ready to make a difference one lap at a time.



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Dover celebrates Juneteenth on June 15th featuring some of the best music and entertainment in Delaware along with several food trucks and activities for the whole family, the event starts with a parade at 12 o'clock.

Clifford Brown Jazz Festival opne Wednesday June 19 and runs through Saturday June 22 in Rodney Square, in Wilmington. For a complete schedule, viist www.cliffordbrownjazzfest.org

Kent County Parks and Recreation will feature at Brecknock County park in Camden DE on July 3rd, a Soul music night. Pack a picnic basket, bring a blanket or lawn chair, and join us for free live entertainment featuring Delaware favorites Best Kept Soul playing a dance-inducing mix of R&B, soul and popular dance hits. (In case of inclement weather, the program will move inside to the Kent County Public Library, 497 S. Red Haven Ln., Dover.

Candidates: Deadline for Candidates to File for Office for the 2024 General Election is July 9th at noon.

DFRW is hosting Candidate and Volunteer Training on July 13 at Grottos in Dover Delaware for \$15. To register, visit www.LeadershipInstitute.org/delaware2024



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