



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
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+\$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.



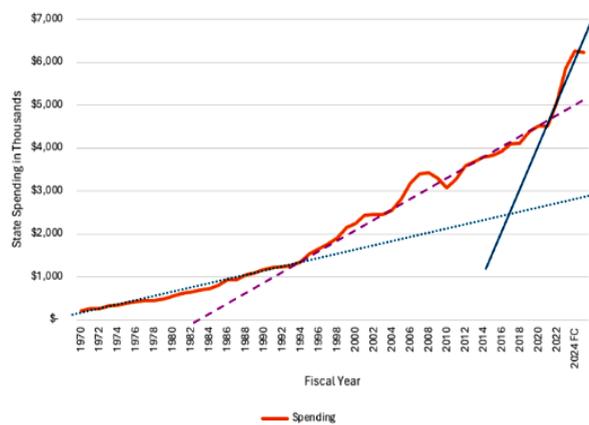
Record Increases in Spending Continue as State Revenues Slow!

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.

Ice Cream Festival Returns to Rockwood Park on Saturday June 29th

CLAYMONT, DE: Get ready for the highly anticipated Ice Cream Festival at Rockwood Park & Museum on June 29, 2024, from 1 p.m. to 9 p.m. This family-friendly event features a delightful mix of ice cream, live music, kids' activities, and more.

Indulge in ice cream from top vendors like UDairy Creamery, Brusters of Wilmington, and Woodside Farms. Savor diverse flavors from food trucks including Burgers by Wildwich, Sherri's Crab Cakes, and Mojo Loco.

Enjoy live performances by Wagner, Waterman, & Chance, The Bullets, Nic Snow, Shazbots, Blues Reincarnation Project, and Nitro Nitra. The Family

Entertainment Stage features acts like Drama Kids Delaware and Professor Horn's Punch and Judy Show.

Kids can enjoy carnival games, train rides, and more. Adults can relax in the Beer and Wine Garden presented by Bellefonte Brewing Company and Swigg Real Wine Craft Beer & Spirits.

Explore the Maker Market with over 35 vendors, take guided museum tours, and end the day with a spectacular fireworks display.

Tickets: \$5, free for kids 12 and under with adult admission. Purchase online via Ticket Spicket.

Parking: Free at Rockwood Office Park, 501 Carr Road, with shuttle services available.



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What Does It Take to Implement a Good Idea?

DRAC to Review Community Garden Proposal by Claymont Community Center's Food Bank

CLAYMONT, DE: The Claymont Design Review Advisory Committee (DRAC) is set to review an exciting new proposal from the Claymont Community Center's Food Bank to develop a community garden on June 26th. This initiative aims to foster local food production, enhance community engagement, and promote sustainable practices.

A Green Vision for Claymont

The Claymont Community Center's Food Bank has presented a plan to transform a portion of their grounds into a thriving community garden. This project, designed to provide fresh produce to local residents, especially those in need, aligns with broader goals of food security and community well-being.

Community Involvement and Benefits

The proposed garden is expected to serve multiple purposes:



Food Production: Growing fresh fruits and vegetables to supplement the offerings of the Food Bank.

Education: Providing a space for educational programs on gardening, nutrition, and sustainability.

Community Building: Creating a gathering place for residents to connect, volunteer, and participate in garden activities.

DRAC's Role in the Review Process
The Claymont DRAC, responsible

for ensuring that development projects align with the community's aesthetic and functional standards, will evaluate the proposal's feasibility, design, and impact.

The committee's review will focus on:

- **Site Design:** Ensuring the garden is well-integrated into the existing landscape and accessible to the community.
- **Sustainability:** Assessing the

environmental benefits and the garden's alignment with sustainable practices.

- **Community Input:** Considering feedback from local residents and stakeholders to ensure the project meets community needs and expectations.

Looking Ahead

If approved, the community garden will not only enhance the Claymont Community Center's efforts to fight food insecurity but also serve as a model for other communities seeking to implement similar initiatives. The review by the DRAC is a crucial step in bringing this vision to life, ensuring that it benefits the community while adhering to local guidelines and standards.

Next Steps

The DRAC meeting to discuss the community garden proposal is scheduled for Wednesday June 26, 2024. Residents are encouraged to attend, offer input, and support this initiative that promises to enrich the Claymont community.

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.

The Delaware Shakespeare Festival: Presents Julius Caesar in 2024

As the summer of 2024 unfolds, the Delaware Shakespeare Festival once again becomes the cultural centerpiece of the state, drawing audiences from near and far to the enchanting grounds of Rockwood Park. This year marks a significant milestone for

the festival, celebrating its twentieth season with a riveting production of "Julius Caesar," a play that resonates with timeless themes of ambition, power, and betrayal.

The festival's enduring success is a testament to its unwavering commitment to making Shakespeare's works accessible and engaging to all. With the introduction of Mariah Ghant as the new Artistic Director and Robert Tombari as the Managing Director, Delaware Shakespeare continues to thrive under dynamic leadership. Their vision for a Delaware where everyone can celebrate and explore shared humanity through Shakespeare's lens is more palpable than ever.

This season's choice of "Julius Caesar" is particularly poignant, offering an examination of tyranny that challenges both the actors and the audience to reflect on the

nature of leadership and the consequences of political maneuvering. The production, set against the backdrop of Rockwood Park's natural beauty, promises to be a powerful experience that merges the classic with the contemporary.

The festival's impact extends beyond the stage, with educational programs like the Nancy B. Lynch College Apprentice Program and on-demand monologue coaching, nurturing the next generation of theatre enthusiasts and professionals. Community engagement is at the heart of Delaware Shakespeare's mission, with initiatives like the Community Tour bringing



professional productions to those with limited access to the arts.

As Producing Artistic Director David Stradley reflects on his twelve years of leadership, he leaves behind a legacy of artistic excellence and community connection. The festival's strategic plan, which poses the question of nurturing an abundant cultural ecosystem, is now being realized more fully than ever.

The Delaware Shakespeare Festival is not just an event; it's a celebration of artistic expression, a gathering of community, and a reflection of society's complexities through the timeless works of William Shakespeare. As the festival continues to evolve, it remains a beacon of cultural enrichment, inviting everyone to partake in the transformative power of theatre.

For more information on the Delaware Shakespeare Festival and its 2024 season, visit their official website Your support and participation help bring the community together for vibrant theatre and learning experiences. Join everyone in the park this summer for a Shakespearean experience like no other.

About This Paper

For more information about this publication, please feel free to call George D. Rotsch 302-354-5730.



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Delaware Gubernatorial Race 2024: Who is still in the race to lead us through the Pending Budget Crisis?

As the 2024 gubernatorial race in Delaware gains momentum, the field is brimming with diverse candidates, each bringing unique experiences and visions for the future of the First State. Let's take a closer look at the contenders vying for the governorship:

Professional Politician Lt. Gov Bethany Hall-Long:

Currently serving as Delaware's Lieutenant Governor, Bethany Hall-Long brings a robust background in nursing and public health to the forefront of her campaign. With a focus on healthcare policy and community well-being, Hall-Long has been instrumental in driving initiatives to improve healthcare access and outcomes across the state. Her tenure as Lt. Governor played a key role in the State taker of the Hospital System SB350 this session.



Entrepreneur and Business Leader Rep. Mike Ramone:

As the House Republican Leader in Delaware, Mike Ramone pre-

sents a platform anchored in principles of fiscal responsibility and economic growth.

With a background in state politics and a focus on tax reform, Ramone's campaign appeals to voters seeking pragmatic solutions to fiscal challenges while championing pro-business policies. His track record of legislative leadership underscores his commitment to advancing policies that spur economic vitality and promote job creation across the state.



Former Teacher & New Castle County Executive Matt Meyer:

Matt Meyer, the Executive of New Castle County, stands as a formidable candidate with a multifaceted approach to governance. With a background in education and a



track record of fostering economic development and environmental sustainability, Meyer's leadership style is characterized by a blend of pragmatism and progressive ideals. He emphasizes on community engagement and inclusive policymaking and proposed the largest increase in Public Education ever in his campaign platform.

Retired NYPD Officer Jerry Price:

Jerry Price, a retired New York City Police Department (NYPD) officer, enters the gubernatorial race with a steadfast focus on public safety and community well-being. Drawing on his law enforcement background, Price's campaign prioritizes initiatives aimed at reducing crime and enhancing police-community relations. His advocacy for stronger community policing strategies and investment in social services reflects a holistic approach to addressing public safety challenges while fostering trust and cooperation between law enforcement and the communities they serve.



Former DNREC Secretary and Environmentalist Collin O'Mara:

Collin O'Mara, former Secretary of the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC), brings a wealth of experience in environmental stewardship to the gubernatorial race. A staunch advocate for clean energy and climate action, O'Mara's campaign resonates with those prioritizing environmental conservation and sustainable development. His vision for Delaware centers on leveraging innovation to mitigate climate change while fostering economic growth that is both equitable and environmentally responsible.



As the campaign unfolds, Delaware voters face a pivotal decision in selecting the next leader to guide the state forward. The race of the Democratic side is hotly contested. The two parties will select their candidate in a primary in September.

Candlelight Theatre Opens Enchanting Production of "The Fantasticks" on July 13

Wilmington, DE - The Candlelight Theatre is set to open its eagerly anticipated production of "The Fantasticks" on July 13, promising an evening of enchantment and nostalgia for all attendees. This timeless musical, which holds the record as the longest-running musical in theater history, offers a magical journey that is part fairy tale, part fable, and entirely captivating.

"The Fantasticks" features book and lyrics by Tom Jones and music by Harvey Schmidt. Its memorable songs, such as "Try to Remember" and "Soon It's Gonna Rain," have endeared it to audiences for over six decades. The musical's extraordinary longevity can be attributed to its exploration of universal themes that resonate deeply with the human experience—love, family, friendship, and the trials we face in life.

"The Fantasticks will, as it has done for over 60 years, transport you to that special place in your memory," said the Candlelight Theatre's artistic director. "It's a story that reminds us of the beauty and simplicity of love, that spot beside the clover where someone's hand held your hand and love was sweeter than the berries."

The story follows a young couple, Matt and Luisa, whose love is tested by a series of trials orchestrated by

their mischievous fathers. Through a series of humorous and poignant events, the couple learns valuable lessons about love and life. The simplicity of the set and the intimacy of the Candlelight Theatre's venue will draw the audience into the world of the play, making them a part of this enchanting experience.



Located in the heart of Arden, the Candlelight Theatre is more than just a place to watch a play—it's a full evening out. As a renowned dinner theater, it offers a delightful dining experience to complement the performance. Patrons can indulge in a delicious meal with a variety of options before the show begins, and a full bar is available to enhance the evening with your favorite beverages.

"The Candlelight Theatre provides not just a show, but an entire night of entertainment," said the Terri Healy, President of the Board. "Our guests can enjoy great food and drinks in a charming, cozy atmosphere, making it a perfect night out."

Additionally, the convenience of free parking ensures a hassle-free experience from start to finish, allowing guests to focus on the joy and magic of the performance.

The production promises to be a highlight of the summer theater season, offering both long-time fans and newcomers a chance to experience the magic of this beloved musical.

Tickets are available now, and the Candlelight Theatre encourages everyone to join in this celebration of love, memory, and music.

For more information and to purchase tickets, please visit the Candlelight Theatre's website or contact the box office. Don't miss this opportunity to be a part of a theatrical experience that has charmed audiences for generations.



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68th DFRC Blue-Gold All*Star Football Game on Friday, June 21st

The highly anticipated 68th Delaware Blue-Gold All*Star Football Game is scheduled for Friday, June 21, 2024.

This annual event, organized by the Delaware Foundation Reaching Citizens (DFRC), highlights the best high school football talent across the state while promoting a powerful message of inclusion for individuals with intellectual disabilities.

The Blue-Gold All*Star Game features exceptional high school football players, cheerleaders, band members, and student ambassadors from schools throughout Delaware. These participants play a vital role in the success of the event and the DFRC's mission to enrich the lives of Delawareans with intellectual disabilities.

A highlight of the program is the Hand-in-Hand Program, where participants are paired with children and young adults with intellectual disabilities, known as Blue-Gold All*Star Buddies. Together, they engage in monthly events, including dance parties, bowling outings, and pool parties, building lasting friendships and a sense of community.

Tickets are available for purchase at www.DFRC.org

Parking lots will open at 5, with opening ceremonies set for 6. Tickets (\$10-\$20) are available in advance at bluehens.eventue.net/events/BCC-DFRC and will also be available at the gate on game day.



The DFRC Blue-Gold All*Star Football Game dates back to 1956. It was inspired by founders Bob Carpenter and Jim Williams, both parents of children with intellectual disabilities



The Hand-in-Hand Program is the heart of the DFRC Blue-Gold experience. Each year, the Hand-in-Hand Buddies - children and young adults between the ages of 4 and 18 with an intellectual disability- are matched with vetted high school students participating in the DFRC Blue-Gold All*Star Football Program though the DFRC Hand-in-Hand Program lifelong friendships have been created through the DFRC Blue-Gold Hand-in-Hand Program!



The Head Coaches: The coaching staffs for the 68th annual DFRC Blue-Gold All-Star football game Marvin Dooley of Woodbridge will serve as head coach of the Gold team, while John Reed of Caravel will be head coach of the Blue team..



Participants: B.J. Alleyne, 3A Player of the Year and State Champion Salesianum running back, will be among the 72 Delaware high school seniors playing in the 68th annual DFRC Blue-Gold All-Star football game on June 21 at Delaware Stadium

A total of 48 Delaware high schools will be represented by students participating as football players, cheerleaders, band members and student ambassadors.



The game benefits the Delaware Foundation Reaching Citizens with intellectual disabilities and has raised more than \$6.4 million since its inception in 1956.

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		\$23 - CUSHIONED CLUB SEATS	
5 PM <small>GATES OPENS</small>	7 PM <small>KICKOFF!</small>	HOME - BLUE	AWAY - GOLD
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How Much Money Do We Need To Run Delaware?

Delaware's Revenues Go, So Goes Spending! What Happens When Revenues Stop Going Up and Governor Candidates Promise Even More New Spending?

By Charlie Copeland

Governor Carney came into office in 2017 facing a \$400 million deficit and vowed not to leave his successor with the same problem. He won't, but his successor's problem will likely be much worse. Governor Carney has dramatically increased the State's base spending level while presiding over a flat economy.

History shows that higher spending requires higher revenues, but the revenue forecast for the state is essentially flat for the next couple of years.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Delaware's government dramatically increased spending to match



COVID-19 revenues. This higher spending base means there is an inherent demand for more spending to support the higher salaries and more programs added during the COVID-19 spendathon.

One example of higher spending is in education. Education spending has risen 34% in the last eight years despite the drastic decline in education outcomes.

Another spending example comes from the Governor's budget proposal for Medicaid, which is "nearly 40% of the operating budget growth [in the proposed budget]." The state significantly expanded the Medicaid rolls in Delaware during COVID-19, and the costs are now

"built-in." Education and Medicaid account for half of Delaware's spending.

Despite the flat revenue forecast, the major gubernatorial candidates are all touting 20% plus spending increases in education, "green" energy subsidies, Medicaid, etc. These spending proposals will rapidly eliminate John Carney's attempted budget reserve.

Ask the Governor Candidates!!

I'm suggesting that Voters in Delaware ask every candidate for Governor where the money comes from when the economy slows down and the growth of government does not!

Your Legislative Update By Brent Burdge

If you like me, it's "Most Wonderful Time of the Year"! Here is my overview and Insights into Active Bills in the Current Term of the Delaware General Assembly. Second of the 2-year, 152nd General Assembly, convening 1/9/2024 and ending 6/30/2024.



- **SB2 "Permit to Purchase Handguns" Passed** – Signed by Governor was Immediately met with a lawsuit from Delaware State Sportsmen's Association.
- **HB140, HA1 "Assisted Suicide" Passed the House**, Hearing held in the Executive Committee – expect to move to the Senate floor.
- **HS2 for HB110 "Taxpayer-Funded Abortions"** Passed the House, Moves to the Senate Passed 26-11, with NCC Republicans voting "Yes".
- **HB346 – Gender Transition Surgery on Minors** erects legal protection for healthcare providers performing gender reassignment surgeries and related treatments. Bill is on the House Ready List.
- **HS1 for HB350 "Hospital Cost Review Board"** Passed, Awaits Action by Governor establishes state control of hospital budget and pricing.
- **SS1 for SB4 "Softening Sentencing & Probation Guidelines"** is under consideration in Senate Finance – estimated annual costs of \$27M!
- **Republican Bills to Reduce Tax Burdens Were Consistently Stalled in Committee including:**
- **HB128 "Revision to State Tax Brackets"** – Establishing new brackets between \$60K-100K and above \$100K. Reported out of committee. On House Ready List since May '23.
- **HB233 "Revise/Collapse Tax Brackets"** – Introduced by Rep. Ramone, 6/16/23. Motion to release failed.
- **HB321 "Increase Personal Exemption for Lower Income Earning Individuals"** – Introduced by Rep. Yearick, 3/5/24, but not worked in committee.

Delaware State Government Spending Much Higher than the Budget Suggests

In a recent revelation, the actual amount of money spent by the Delaware State Government has been unveiled to be significantly higher than previously understood. According to the National Association of State Budget Officers (NASBO), Delaware's total expenditures for the fiscal year (FY) 2023 reached a staggering \$15.5 billion. This figure encompasses general funds, other state funds, bonds, and federal funds.

The disclosure comes in the wake of NASBO's comprehensive report, which indicated that total expenditures across all states for FY 2022 amounted to \$2.9 trillion. These expenditures varied widely among states, from a low of \$4.7 billion in Wyoming to a high of \$467.6 billion in California.

Delving deeper into Delaware's financial landscape, NASBO's data highlights the state's recent expenditure trends. The figures reveal a consistent increase in spending over the past few years:

- **FY 2023:** General fund spending was \$5.9 billion, with total spending, including federal transfers, hitting \$15.5 billion.
- **FY 2022:** General fund spending was \$5.1 billion, with total spending at \$14.4 billion.
- **FY 2021:** General fund spending was \$4.5 billion, with total spending at \$13.3 billion.
- **FY 2020:** General fund spending was \$4.5 billion, with total spending at \$11.9 billion.
- **FY 2019:** General fund spending was \$4.4 billion, with total spending at \$11.3 billion.

These numbers underscore a significant upward trajectory in Delaware's expenditures,

reflecting both the growth in state-funded initiatives and the substantial influx of federal funds, particularly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

A striking aspect of this financial surge is its contrast with Delaware's population growth rate, which has hovered around 1% annually. This disparity suggests that the state's spending growth has vastly outpaced its population increase, raising questions about the sustainability and efficiency of such fiscal policies.

For those seeking more information on Delaware's budgetary details, comprehensive resources are available through the State of Delaware Office of Management and Budget, the Delaware Department of Finance, and Delaware's Transparency Resources.

As Delawareans come to grips with these figures, the state's fiscal management and future spending strategies will undoubtedly be topics of keen public interest and scrutiny.



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“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.



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.



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



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 Spending 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 stu-



Mount Pleasant High School graduates 267 students in front of family and friends during annual Mount Pleasant commencement exercises Sunday, June 02, 2024; at The Bob Carpenter Center Saquan Stimpson/Special to Delaware News Journal

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Larry Lambert
State Representative
& Vice Chair of the Housing
Committee



Shane Stoneman
Candidate for 7th Rep.
Community Activist



Sen. Laura Sturgeon
Delaware State Senate
Education Committee Chair



Ruth Briggs King
Candidate
Lt. Governor

People Making an Impact In Delaware!

- Rep. Larry Lambert has served as the Vice Chair of the Housing Committee while the number of Affordable Housing Units has declined by 14,000 units according to the Housing Alliance Delaware.
- Shane Stoneman calls for “new thinking” as Delaware’s State Government grew 10X faster than the population.
- At the Hockessin Business Association, Sen. Sturgeon insisted that Delaware’s reading test for 3rd graders was too difficult and “unrealistic” for too many students. Only 42% of Delaware Students read at grade level. 45th in the US.
- 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:

Upcoming Concerts at Bellevue State Park: Bring Your Picnic Basket!

Bring your family and friends for a summer filled with incredible music and unforgettable memories at the band shell on Sunday and Thursday evenings to enjoy our free Summer Concert Series.

Sunday, June 23, 2024, at 6:30 PM

The Launch - Tribute Rock
Prepare for an epic night of rock and roll as The Launch, the tri-state area’s only tribute band to Boston, Styx, and Queen, takes the stage. Experience an emotionally charged performance paying homage to these legendary bands.



Thursday, June 27, 2024, at 6:30 PM
Mother’s Highway Junction - Original Americana

Join Mother’s Highway Junction, led by 2023 Delaware Division of the Arts Individual Artist Fellow Mike Miller, for a night of powerful original and Americana music. This unique folk power trio features innovative songwriting and performances by John Kidd on harmonica and vocals, and Bob Hamel on bass.

Sunday, June 30, 2024, at 6:30 PM

The Big House Band - Party Band

Enjoy a dynamic mix of soul, funk, rock, Motown,



pop, and country with The Big House Band. Featuring powerhouse vocals from Jimi Milligan (NBC’s “The Voice”) and Stephanie Chiofalo, this band has captivated audiences for over 25 years. Their setlist includes everything from Sinatra to current hits.

Sunday, July 7, 2024, at 6:30 PM

Basic Cable - 80s Pop
Relive the Golden Age of MTV with Basic Cable. This Philly-based band recreates your favorite 80s music videos with a blend of New Wave, synth-pop, rock, and dance-pop. Band members Dylan McGuire, Kristen Conrad, Dave Marabella, and Tim Hocter bring an immersive audience experience.



Thursday, July 11, 2024, at 6:00 PM
Jimmy & The Parrots - Jimmy Buffett Tribute

Get ready for a tropical escape with Jimmy & The Parrots. This renowned Jimmy Buffett tribute band has been delighting audiences for over 20 years. They perform beloved Buffett hits, classic rock’n roll, and original songs, appealing to all ages and musical tastes.



For more information, call the Concert Hotline at (302) 761-6965. Park entrance fees are in effect.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Enjoy the grounds of the Hagley Museum on Summer Nights at Hagley on Wednesday evening all summer long. The event features Woodside Farms Ice Cream, food trucks or bring a picnic. The cost is only \$5.

A Midsummer Celebration at Winterthur is planned for June 22 at 7:00pm to celebrate the summer solstice with dancing, bonfires and much more

The Delaware Art Museum’s exhibit called “Give Me My Flowers” runs between until September 1 this year.

Claymont Design Review Advisory Committee will meet on Wednesday, June 26, 2024 at 7:00 in the meeting room of the Claymont Library to consider the application for Community Gardens proposed by the Claymont Senior Center.

Candlelight Theatre opens the long running off Broadway hit the FANTASTICKS on July 13. Tickets are available at www.candlelighttheatredelaware.org or by calling the Box Office at 302-475-2313.

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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