

"Federation Corner" column
Montgomery Sentinel - March 11, 2004

Legislative Notes from the Civic Federation

the various MCCF contributors noted

Last autumn the Civic Federation voted overwhelmingly to support a system of voluntary public funding for state election campaigns, and the time has come to act. The Hurson-Clagett-Pinsky bills (HB 1317 and SB 725) have been introduced, and special interest groups will be working hard to defeat these bills. Please call or write your state legislators NOW in support of the legislation. Also call Delegate Sheila Hixson (800-492-7122), Chair of the House Ways and Means Committee, in support of 1317. More information can be found on our website (montgomerycivic.org). (From Peggy Denis)

Also contact Delegate Hixson and your state officials to oppose Hixson's efforts to eliminate the State Historic Preservation Tax Credit. This tax credit adds to the vitality of communities when these buildings are rehabilitated. People are spending their own money to preserve local history. (From Wayne Goldstein)

On March 24th, the Board of Education will vote on the sale of "surplus" school property. Some of these properties have schools, so with all of the portables, how can they be "surplus"? Those that are undeveloped may be valuable for trading with the county for land where a school is needed. In other words, this land should be preserved for schools that are needed now and in the future. Call and register your opposition (301-279-3391).

Other important bills include The Millionaires' Tax Surcharge Bill, SB 4781/HB 1061, which increases the state income tax rate to 7.75% of all Maryland taxable income on incomes exceeding \$500,000. SB 197 authorizes slot machines; HB 1008 provides universal health care and has widespread grassroots support throughout the state. HB 867 provides more oversight of Department of Natural Resources logging permits, practices, and revenues, and HB 868 redirects logging revenues to habitat protection. (From Luella Mast and the League of Women Voters)