



Center for Effective Lawmaking

Highlights from the 2019-2022 Maryland General Assembly Legislative Effectiveness Scores

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Executive Summary

The Center for Effective Lawmaking (CEL) is pleased to announce the release of the State Legislative Effectiveness Scores (SLES) for the 2019-2022 Maryland General Assembly legislative session. This report offers highlights from our initial analyses of these scores, including:

- We identify the top-10 most effective lawmakers in each party in the House of Delegates and State Senate, including many who continued their patterns of highly effective lawmaking from the previous General Assemblies.
- We identify those lawmakers with the longest streaks of being in our prestigious “Above Expectations” category, as well as first-term legislators in this category.
- We find that, consistent with our published research findings, there is an overall lawmaking benefit from being in the majority party. Although some individual minority-party legislators achieved high lawmaking effectiveness, their average scores remain lower than their majority-party counterparts due to structural barriers that they face in trying to advance their agendas.
- Lawmaking effectiveness is a consistent trait among legislators, with several legislators appearing among the top-10 most effective lawmakers across multiple legislative sessions.
- Lawmaking in the Maryland General Assembly is more egalitarian than is found in most states, neither dominated by high-performing committee chairs nor overly dismissive of ideas from junior members or those in the minority party.

Introduction and Methodology

The State Legislative Effectiveness Scores discussed here are based on the combination of fifteen metrics capturing the bills that each member of each state legislature sponsors, how far their bills move through the lawmaking process, and how substantial their policy proposals are. The scores are normalized to an average value of 1.0 in both the House of Delegates and the State Senate in each legislative session. More on our [methodology](#) and [scores](#) can be found at our website.

For each member of the House of Delegates and State Senate, we also identify a Benchmark Score, based on the average lawmaking effectiveness of legislators who share that legislator's majority- or minority-party status, level of seniority, and chair position on a committee. Controlling for these considerations is important in order to describe legislators on a more level playing field. For example, in the 2019-2022 Maryland House of Delegates, minority-party lawmakers had an average SLES of 0.67, compared to 1.13 for majority-party members, while committee chairs had an average SLES of 1.18. In the State Senate, those averages were 0.72 in the minority party, 1.12 in the majority party, and 1.17 among committee chairs. Turning to seniority, in the House of Delegates, average majority-party freshmen had an SLES of 0.91, while the average majority party member in her third term in office had an SLES of 1.95. The accompanying numbers for the Senate are 1.15 and 1.26.

We then label each lawmaker as “Above Expectations” for those outperforming their benchmark scores by 50% or more, “Below Expectations” for those below 50% of their benchmark, and “Meeting Expectations” for all other legislators.

Finally, within each party, we rank each member according to their SLES. This ranking is used to generate the Top Ten lists highlighted in the tables below. Given the substantial lawmaking benefit that follows from being in the majority party, ranking the entire Maryland General Assembly together would be inappropriate, but these comparisons within each party are quite informative.

Highly Effective Democratic Lawmakers in the 2019-2022 House of Delegates

The following table identifies the ten highest-scoring Democrats in the 2019-2022 House of Delegates.

Top Ten List—House Democrats (2019-2022 Legislative Session)

	<u>Name</u>	<u>LES</u>	<u>Terms Served</u>
1.	Adrienne Jones (District 10)	3.39	6
2.	Kathleen Dumais (District 15)	2.77	5
3.	Brooke Lierman (District 46)	2.77	2
4.	Samuel Rosenberg (District 41)	2.65	10
5.	Dana Stein (District 11)	2.51	4
6.	Joseline Peña-Melnyk (District 21)	2.41	4
7.	Eric Luedtke (District 14)	2.36	3
8.	Lorig Charkoudian (District 20)	2.33	1
9.	Stephanie Smith (District 45)	2.29	1
10.	Alonzo Washington (District 22)	2.26	2

At the top of the list is Delegate Adrienne Jones from District 10 (Baltimore County) with a score of 3.39. In the 2019-2022 legislative sessions, she introduced 97 bills, 89 received action in committee, 39 received action beyond committee, 36 passed the House of Delegates, and 30

became law. She began her service in the Maryland House of Delegates in 1997 and was voted Speaker in 2019. She graduated from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County with a B.A. in psychology in 1976. Four Democratic delegates on our current list were also among the top-10 highest scores in the previous legislative session (that convened from 2015-2018), Delegate Kathleen Dumais (District 15), Delegate Samuel Rosenberg (District 41), Delegate Joseline Peña-Melnyk (District 21), and Delegate Eric Luedtke (District 14).

Highly Effective Republican Lawmakers in the 2019-2022 Maryland General Assembly

The following table identifies the top ten highest-scorers in the 2019-2022 Maryland General Assembly among minority-party Republicans.

Top Ten List—House Republicans (2019-2022 Legislative Session)

	<u>Name</u>	<u>LES</u>	<u>Terms Served</u>
1.	Nicholaus Kipke (District 31B)	1.89	4
2.	Robin Grammer (District 6)	1.44	2
3.	Steven Arentz (District 36)	1.36	3
4.	Jason Buckel (District 1B)	1.31	2
5.	Kevin Hornberger (District 35A)	1.26	2
6.	Wendell Beitzel (District 1A)	1.24	4
7.	Dan Cox (District 4)	1.24	1
8.	Susan Krebs (District 5)	1.19	5
9.	Christopher Adams (37B)	1.09	2
10.	Michael Malone (District 33)	0.96	1

Topping our list is Delegate Nicholaus Kipke of District 31B (Anne Arundel County), with a State Legislative Effectiveness Score of 1.89. Delegate Kipke has served in the Maryland House of Delegates since 2007 and served as the Minority Leader from 2012 to 2021. He introduced 69 bills in the 2019-2022 legislative session, 63 received action in committee, 22 received action beyond committee, 21 passed the House of Delegates, and 19 became law. He graduated from Anne Arundel Community College and worked as a restaurant manager for FriendCo Restaurants until 2000, when he became a manufacturer representative for REPS & Associates. Three Republican delegates on our current list were also among the top-10 highest scores in the previous legislative session (which convened from 2015-2018), Delegate Nicholaus Kipke (District 31B), Delegate Wendell Beitzel (District 1A), and Delegate Susan Krebs (District 5).

Highly Effective Democrat Lawmakers in the 2019-2022 State Senate

Top Ten List—Senate Democrats (2019-2022 Legislative Session)

	<u>Name</u>	<u>LES</u>	<u>Terms Served</u>
1.	Cory McCray (District 45)	1.95	1

2.	Sarah Elfreth (District 30)	1.88	1
3.	Clarence Lam (District 12)	1.69	1
4.	Jill Carter (District 41)	1.64	1
5.	Katherine Klausmeier (District 8)	1.61	5
6.	William Ferguson (District 46)	1.59	3
7.	Brian Feldman (District 15)	1.57	3
8.	Jeff Waldstreicher (District 18)	1.56	1
9.	Antonio Hayes (District 40)	1.55	1
10.	Cheryl Kagan (District 17)	1.54	2

Among Democrats in the State Senate, Sen. Cory McCray from District 45 (northeast Baltimore city) was ranked first in terms of his SLES score, with a score of 1.95. He introduced 124 bills, 121 received action in committee, 82 received action beyond committee, 74 passed the Senate, and 49 became law. He previously served in the Maryland House of Delegates and as acting Chair of the Maryland Democratic Party. He received an associate's degree in business management from Baltimore City Community College and a B.A. from the National Labor College in 2013. He served on the Baltimore City Board of Elections from 2011 to 2013 and along with other community leaders formed the B.E.S.T. Democratic Club in 2012. In 2013, he declared his candidacy for the Maryland House of Delegates.

Two Senators on the list were also among the top-10 highest scoring Democrats in the previous legislative session (which convened between 2015-2018). These Senators are Sen. Katherine Klausmeier (District 8), and Sen. Brian Feldman (District 15).

Highly Effective Republican Lawmakers in the 2019-2022 State Senate

Top Five List—Senate Republicans (2019-2022 Legislative Session)

	<u>Name</u>	<u>LES</u>	<u>Terms Served</u>
1.	Chris West (District 42)	1.84	1
2.	Adelaide Eckardt (District 37)	1.27	2
3.	George Edwards (District 1)	1.23	4
4.	Bryan Simonaire (District 31)	0.99	4
5.	Jack Bailey (District 29)	0.92	1

Sen. Chris West from District 42 (central and northern Baltimore County) had the highest SLES for Senate Republicans in the 2019-2022 legislative session, with a score of 1.84. He introduced 134 bills, 131 received action in committee, 71 received action beyond committee, 65 passed the Senate, and 45 became law. Sen. West previously was a member of the Maryland House of Delegates from 2015 to 2019. Sen. West earned a B.A. degree from Williams College in 1972, and earned a J.D. from the University of Pennsylvania School of Law in 1975. Sen. West first became

involved in politics when he worked as an attorney for the Maryland Republican Party from 1982 to 1996, and again from 1998 to 2003 after serving as the executive director of the Republican State Central Committee for two years.

Turning to the Republican Senators in the 2019-2022 legislative session, we find that there is overlap between the highest performers on the top-five list for the 2019-2022 legislative session and the top-5 list for Republican legislators in the previous legislative session (which convened between 2015-2018), with Sen. Adelaide Eckardt (District 37), Sen. George Edwards (District 1), and Sen. Bryan Simonaire (District 31) appearing on both lists.

Lawmakers with Long-Standing Patterns of Above Expectations in Lawmaking Effectiveness

Those who significantly exceed their benchmark score (which is calculated based on a legislator's seniority and status as a majority party member and/or committee chairperson) are identified as being in our "Above Expectations" category. The lists below show those Delegates with the longest active streaks of exceeding expectations in consecutive sessions, continuing through (and including) the 2019-2022 General Assembly.

Delegates with Longest Streak of "Above Expectations" (through the 2019-2022 General Assembly)

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Streak</u>	<u>SLES</u> <u>(in 2019-2022)</u>	<u>Terms Served</u>
1.	Samuel Rosenberg (D-41)	7 General Assemblies	2.65	10 General Assemblies
2.	Kathleen Dumais (D-15)	5 General Assemblies	2.77	5 General Assemblies
3.	Joseline Peña-Melnyk (D-21)	4 General Assemblies	2.41	4 General Assemblies
4.	Eric Luedtke (D-14)	3 General Assemblies	2.36	3 General Assemblies
5.	Nicholaus Kipke (R-31B)	3 General Assemblies	1.89	4 General Assemblies

Delegate Samuel Rosenberg (D) from District 41 (Baltimore City) tops our list with a 7-session streak of "Above Expectations." In the 2019-2022 General Assembly, he introduced 102 bills, 100 received action in committee, 36 received action beyond committee, 31 passed the House, and 16 became law. He has represented the 41st District since 1983 and is currently the longest serving member in the Maryland General Assembly. He earned his B.A. in political science from Amherst College in 1972 and earned his J.D. from Columbia University in 1975. He was elected to the Baltimore City Democratic Central Committee in 1974 and worked for the Baltimore Housing Authority from 1975 to 1976 and again from 1979 to 1981 in between producing WJZ-TV's

Square Off talk show. He then worked as a congressional assistant and lobbyist for Baltimore Mayor William Donald Schaefer and taught a class in legislation at the University of Maryland.

High-Performing Freshmen

A useful way to identify lawmakers who might step into roles of greater influence is by examining first-term Delegates and Senators who received an “Above Expectations” rating. These high-performing freshmen lawmakers demonstrate emerging legislative talent.

Freshmen Delegates “Above Expectations” (2019-2022 General Assembly)

	<u>Name</u>	<u>LES (in 2019-2022)</u>
1.	Lorig Charkoudian (D-20)	2.33
2.	Stephanie Smith (D-45)	2.29
3.	Julie Palakovich Carr (D-17)	2.12
4.	Jheanelle Wilkins (D-20)	2.11
5.	Michele Guyton (D-42B)	1.97
6.	Lily Qi (D-15)	1.68
7.	Jared Solomon (D-18)	1.59
8.	Stewart Vaughn (D-19)	1.59
9.	Dan Cox (R-4)	1.24
10.	Michael Malone (R-33)	0.96

The top-performing Democratic freshman was State Delegate Lorig Charkoudian (District 20), with a SLES score of 2.33. Delegate Charkoudian received a bachelor’s degree in mathematical economics from Pomona University in 1995 and a Ph.D. in economics from Johns Hopkins University in 2002. She served as the executive director of Community Mediation Maryland since 2004, and she has served on several boards. The top freshman Republican, Delegate Dan Cox (District 4), earned a score of 1.24, placing him seventh among Republican lawmakers in the 439th-2019-2022 General Assembly.

Freshmen Senators “Above Expectations” (2019-2022 General Assembly)

	<u>Name</u>	<u>LES (in 2019-2022)</u>
1.	Cory McCray (D-45)	1.95
2.	Sarah Elfreth (D-30)	1.88
3.	Chris West (R-42)	1.84
4.	Clarence Lam (D-12)	1.69

The top-performing Democratic freshman was State Senator Cory McCray (District 45), who was also first among Senate Democrats with the highest SLES score with a score of 1.95. The top

freshman Republican, Senator Chris West (District 42), earned a score of 1.84, placing him first among Republican lawmakers in the 2019-2022 General Assembly.

Other Findings

In terms of broader patterns, our data shows the Maryland General Assembly to be more egalitarian than is found in most other states. For example, perhaps due to the presence of Republican governor Hogan, Democrats seemed to allow many Republican proposals to advance, with an average SLES for Republicans in 2019-2022 being around 0.7, much higher than for minority-party lawmakers in most states. This led to more than 400 Republican proposals advancing to law.

Moreover, lawmaking in Maryland is also not strongly based on seniority. Indeed, the average first-term Senator scored higher than more senior members did, with more than 25 of their bills each becoming law on average.

Conclusion

The 2019-2022 Maryland legislative session demonstrated consistent patterns in legislative effectiveness, with experienced legislators, and majority-party members continuing to hold a distinct advantage in advancing their policy agendas. Across both chambers, many of the most effective lawmakers continued their high performance from previous sessions, indicating a durable capacity for lawmaking among key figures. These findings underscore the importance of institutional positions and experiences in shaping legislative outcomes in Maryland.