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Chris B. Bennett & Joan Owens, Co-Publishers

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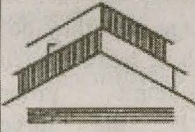
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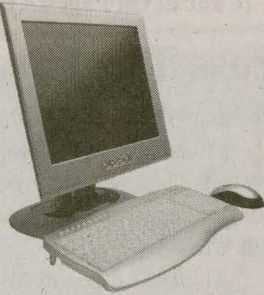
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Baltimore Prosecutor: Hardship Became Inspiration For Reform

By Natalie Pompilio
Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) - When Baltimore City State's Attorney Marilyn Mosby decided to run for her current office, she reached out to community activists, politicians and business leaders, eager to share her ideas. Almost all of them, she said, discouraged her from seeking election.

"I was told I was too inexperienced, that I couldn't raise enough money, that my decision to run could not only disrupt but potentially destroy my husband's political career," she recalled during a speech Sunday in Philadelphia. "For me, as a young black woman, to run against an older white male incumbent, powerful, with the ability to raise close to a million dollars, the skeptics wanted to know: How could I have the audacity?"

It was a line that drew cheers from the largely female crowd of more than 500 people gathered at an NAACP empowerment forum, part of the organization's 106th annual convention. Mosby ignored



Marilyn Mosby

the advice and was propelled to victory. At 35, she is the youngest chief prosecutor in any major American city.

"I tell you my story not to brag or to boast. I tell my story, I share my testimony, because I recognize that I got to where I am today not because of my own doing but because of the blood, sweat, tears and sacrifices of the audacious warrior women who have come before me, who lived their lives by example for all of us," she said.

Mosby was thrust into the national spotlight in April after 25-year-old Freddie Gray was arrested and suffered a spinal injury while being transported in a

police van. He died a week later.

Residents took to the streets in protest for days afterward. Some of the demonstrations became violent and some protesters looted businesses and set fires. In response, the governor announced a citywide curfew and deployed the National Guard to Baltimore.

After a medical examiner ruled Gray's death a homicide, Mosby charged the six officers involved in Gray's arrest with felonies ranging from assault to murder.

During her speech Sunday, she shared personal stories of loss, including the shooting death of a beloved

cousin when she was 14 that she said helped her turn her pain into her passion to reform the criminal justice system. She talked about setbacks, like when she was wait-listed at every law school she'd applied to and then failed the bar exam the first time she took it. She described how others had doubted her, sometimes causing her to doubt herself.

Overcoming those hardships were an important part of her story, she said, adding they're important parts of all stories and should be shared to inspire others.

"All too often, in our communities, when we feel we've obtained a level of success, we want people to see where we are and not how we got to where we are," she said. "But we, as women, must cast our shame, our pride, our egos aside and continue to pass on our testimonies, our tried and tested journeys, to the generations coming behind us."

Mosby ended by telling the crowd: "Ladies, we have work to do and the time is now."

Reparations Commission

Continued From Front Page

job treating racial and ethnic groups equally, but less than 30 percent of Blacks felt the same way.

In a statement, Kamm Howard, a leader of the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (NCOBRA) and a member of the NAARC, said that an executive order creating the commission will help to re-frame the national discussion of reparatory justice around the international standards of full repair.

"This includes halting many discriminatory practices, efforts aimed at restoring and making whole our peoplehood, a variety of compensatory policies,

dignity enhancing projects, programs and policies as well as various modalities that initiate healing from post-traumatic slavery syndrome and its many manifestations," said Howard.

Watson, the former Detroit City Council member, dismissed the idea that the sharp racial discrimination and animosity towards Blacks that sparked the Civil Rights Movement is a thing of the past.

"Black church burnings are occurring presently," Watson said. "The Charleston, S.C. massacre was in our present. That was not a lone gunman."

State Legislature Adjourns After Final Votes

By Rachel La Corte
Associated Press

(AP) - The Washington Legislature adjourned Friday after a marathon triple overtime session where lawmakers raised the gas tax to pay for transportation projects across the state, cut college tuition and put more money toward the state's education system.

Lawmakers went home Friday afternoon after the House passed its last remaining bills.

The House passed a transportation bonding measure on a 63-29 vote, and a transportation spending bill for projects across the state on a 61-30

vote. The two bills were the final two components of a \$16.1 billion transportation revenue bill passed by the Legislature last week.

The chamber also moved a separate bill, on an 89-1 vote, that will delay a requirement for high school students to pass a high school biology exam for this year and 2016, which helps about 2,000 students at risk of not getting diplomas.

The votes came a day after the Senate took its final votes of the year, on both the graduation requirement delay, and a bonding bill tied to the state's \$3.9 billion construction budget.

Senate action Thursday came following a weeklong standoff that threatened to blow a \$2 billion hole in the \$38.2 billion state operating budget signed by Gov. Jay Inslee last week.

That budget had assumed savings from the suspension of the voter-approved Initiative 1351, but a two-thirds vote of each chamber was required. The House easily passed the measure, but Senate Democrats, who were pushing for the graduation requirement delay, initially withheld their support and the measure failed on the Senate floor last week.

After more than a day of negotiations, Senate Bill 6145 was introduced Wednesday. It delays by two years, but does not eliminate, the requirement that students must meet the state standard on the science assessment. Students who did not walk with their graduating class this year, the first year the assessment was required, would still receive a diploma under the measure.

Lawmakers finished their work on their 176th day of session. They adjourned their regular 105-day session two days early at the end of April after encountering their first budget obstacles.

Governor Jay Inslee cited money for early

activists and community stakeholders in cities across the U.S. Now that the nation's attention is focused on race relations, Daniels said that it's time to systematically and seriously address "state of emergency in America's dark ghettos."

Watson agreed, adding that the commission should be established during President Obama's final years in office.

Watson said: "This is the appropriate time, the right place and an absolute opportunity for this nation to step up and fulfill the promises that have been made and not kept."

learning, K-12 education, parks and raises for public employees as budget items he was proud of.

Lawmakers in the Democratic-controlled House and Republican-controlled Senate had struggled for months on the two-year state budget because of differing ideas on how to address a state Supreme Court mandate to put more money into the state's education system.

Democrats initially sought a new capital-gains tax, while Republicans insisted that no taxes were needed because of increasing state revenue. Ultimately, Democrats dropped the new tax idea, and Republicans agreed to close some tax exemptions.

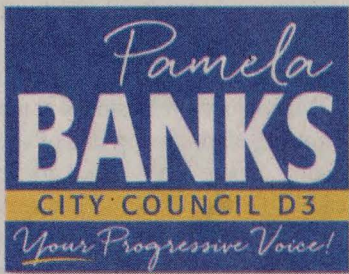
The state budget spends an estimated \$1.3 billion on K-12 basic education, and it phases in tuition cuts at the state's universities and colleges, as well as at community and technical colleges.

With the final votes on the transportation package, the plan, which includes an 11.9-cent increase in the gas tax over the next two years, now goes to Inslee for his expected signature.

The transportation plan would increase the gas tax in two stages: a 7-cent increase on Aug. 1 and a 4.9-cent increase on July 1, 2016.



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