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Posted at 3:15 PM ET, 01/24/2011

## Investment fund, wind energy top O'Malley session agenda

By John Wagner



Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley (D) formally unveiled a legislative package Monday that contained few surprises, is fairly modest in scope and seeks to bolster the administration's job-creation efforts and "green energy" credentials.

The marquee legislation in [the 15-bill package](#) is a \$100 million venture capital fund called InvestMaryland.

The initiative, which O'Malley previously previewed, provides incentives for insurance companies to pay their tax liabilities in advance, providing capital for other Maryland businesses.

Another relatively high-profile bill announced Monday would seek to spur investment in offshore wind farms. The bill, which the administration held off on introducing, will direct state regulators to require Maryland's five distribution utilities to award long-term contracts to procure specified amounts of wind energy.

Other environmentally forward-looking bills in O'Malley's package seek to promote electric vehicles and solar water heating systems, through tax credits and other measures.

A series of other O'Malley-backed bills are intended to help implement the new federal health care law. At a time when many of his Republican colleagues are fighting the law, O'Malley has very publicly embraced it.

Child neglect would become a crime under one of a small handful of public safety bills also on the governor's agenda. According to administration officials, Maryland is the only state without such legislation. The bill would be it a crime "to intentionally fail to provide necessary assistance and resources for a minor, including food, clothing, medical care, and supervision unless a lack of financial resources is the sole cause for the failure."

Other bills seek to reform the state pension system -- an effort O'Malley outlined as he introduced his budget Friday -- and to grant collective bargaining rights to home health-care workers.

The complete list of bills and explanations, as compiled by O'Malley's administration, is available [here](#).

By John Wagner | January 24, 2011; 3:15 PM ET

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