MARYLAND POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

*Politics and Governments
of the American States*

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HERBERT C. SMITH AND JOHN T. WILLIS

Maryland Politics and Government

DEMOCRATIC DOMINANCE

CONTENTS

Buy the Book

TABLES

MAPS

FIGURES

Preface

As a state, Maryland has rarely received wide national recognition. Tucked between the larger and historically more illustrious commonwealths of Pennsylvania and Virginia, Marylanders in general have remained content to enjoy the diversities of environment, economics, and people in the self-proclaimed "land of pleasant living."

Despite the state's less than imposing physical stature, it is the contention of this book that Maryland, its government, its politics, and its policies are eminently worthy of both sustained scrutiny and a measure of acclaim. First, in a state of ample and growing affluence, Maryland's elected officials, predominantly Democrats, have long steered a stable and persistent course of fiscal prudence. The state's and many of its counties' bond ratings consistently score at the triple-A level, a very public rebuke to those who automatically denigrate governmental financial stewardship.

Second, in many respects Maryland does deserve the slogan "America in Miniature" that sometimes adorns its promotional literature. Its terrains are diverse and varied, from the Chesapeake Tidewater to Baltimore City's upscale gentrified communities and desperate drug-infested neighborhoods depicted on *Homicide* and *The Wire*, suburban and rural Piedmont, and Appalachian highlands. Maryland's population, multiracial from its inception, has grown even more diverse as immigrants from other states and countries have made the state one of the most demographically distinct in the nation. Balancing the disparate needs of region, culture, and people in a pluralistic tapestry has long been a requirement of successful Maryland politicians.

The result has been a mix of progressive and pragmatic policies that have proven responsive, fair, and effective. These range from "Smart Growth" programs, designed to channel residential growth to already developed areas, to extensive civil rights protections, educational funding mechanisms

to pay for school construction and equalize educational opportunities, strong support for public and private higher education, environmental protection for "critical areas," marshland and buffers surrounding the Chesapeake Bay, expansive health care benefits, strict air emissions automobile standards, and a mandated "living wage" provision for state contracts.

Finally, Maryland's long-established Democratic Party has achieved consistent dominance in state politics unparalleled south of the Mason-Dixon Line or, for that matter, in most states north of that demarcation. Only Democratic bastions such as Hawaii, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island rival Maryland's propensity to elect and reelect Democrats to govern at the state level.

Although Maryland once was similar to other southern states in its reliance on segregationist appeals based on states' rights, its Democrats reformed and transformed in the civil rights era to forge a persistent and durable biracial majority. In the modern, post–World War II era only three Republicans governors have been elected, serving a total of fourteen years, while the state legislature, the general assembly, has maintained overwhelming Democratic majorities. How Maryland Democrats have continued their electoral supremacy in an age of polarized politics is a testament to their organization, flexible policies, and political pragmatism.

For us it was a labor of love to describe, detail, and explain the dynamics of contemporary Maryland politics and government. We have long served as active participants and observers of the process at both the local and state levels. Herbert C. Smith is a transplanted Philadelphian who arrived in Baltimore for his doctoral work in political science at the Johns Hopkins University and stayed, teaching at McDaniel College since 1973. He managed his first political campaign while still in graduate school in 1971. John T. Willis was born in Baltimore City, grew up in Carroll County, graduated from Harvard Law School, returned to Maryland to practice law after seven years in the U.S. Army Judge Advocate Generals Corp, taught at Western Maryland College (now McDaniel College), and is currently teaching at the University of Baltimore. He served as vice chair of the Maryland Democratic Party and on the Democratic National Committee before his appointment as the Maryland secretary of state for eight years in Governor Parris N. Glendening's administration. In 1982, when John ran for the Maryland House of Delegates, a number of Herb's students served as campaign volunteers. Over the years Herb and John often appeared together on radio and television shows, and their commentaries have peppered newspaper accounts of Maryland campaigns and elections. Their collaboration emerged

from an earlier working group at the William Donald Schaefer Center for Public Policy, housed at the University of Baltimore.

The "Maryland Book," as it came to be called, has occupied our research commitment for the past five years. In contemporary times no other text on Maryland politics and government encompasses the scope and focus of this work. Our motivation has been to detail the democratic processes, the governmental structures, and a broad array of public policies through a political lens that explains the partisan dynamics that have determined electoral outcomes and influenced policy decisions in the Maryland context.

The first chapter explores the Maryland identity; the second examines the historic development of the state and its consequences for modern Maryland. Subsequent chapters deal with contemporary political behavior, Maryland public opinion, political parties, interest groups, and political corruption, the state constitution, the Maryland General Assembly, the governor and the executive branch, the state judiciary, and such policy areas as taxation and spending, environmental protection, land use, and transportation. The nature of intergovernmental relations is examined and future thoughts on government and politics in Maryland are presented.

We sincerely appreciate the substantial support of academic sabbaticals and the helpful resources of McDaniel College and the University of Baltimore. Former students played a major role as well. Our appreciation is extended to M. James Kaufman for lending his research on Maryland lobbyists, Natalie Brown Olson for her work on the full-time commitment of Maryland legislators to the General Assembly, and Karyn Strickler for her insights on the Question 6 pro-choice referendum.

We also wish to thank the many Maryland public officials we have known and worked with during the past four decades. Marylanders should be proud of their hard work and dedication to public service. Among those who spoke with us about this project and have our special appreciation for their thoughts and insight are former governors Parris N. Glendening and Harry R. Hughes, former Maryland attorney general J. Joseph Curran Jr., former Baltimore County executive Theodore G. Venetoulis, former Maryland state senators Julian L. Lapides and George W. Della Jr., former delegates Paul Weisengoff and Donald Lamb, and current delegates A. Wade Kach, and Samuel I. (Sandy) Rosenberg. Public officials who have shared their perspectives in our classrooms include Chief Judge Robert Bell, former secretary of corrections and public safety Stuart Simms, former secretary of the environment Jane Nashida, and delegates Talmadge Branch, Brian McHale, and Nancy Stocksdale.

We also recognize our enduring debt to several distinguished politi-

cal mentors: former comptroller Louis L. Goldstein, former congressman Goodloe Byron (Dem: 6th), Johns Hopkins University professor Milton Cummings, and the esteemed pioneer education advocate C. Milson Raver. They taught us how to judge political events, keep a long-range perspective, and respect the citizen-voter.

We dedicate this book to the two women who kept our spirits elevated and egos checked throughout the long hard slog to the completion of this project: our wives, Beth A. Smith and Kathy S. Mangan.

MARYLAND POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

The Maryland Identity

We Marylanders may look at our State realistically, and still find it lovely. It has variety, it has color, and it has a certain touch of mystery.
    H. L. Mencken

In Annapolis they stand like bronze bookends with the Maryland Capitol Building between them. Both native Marylanders, both U.S. Supreme Court Justices, and the similarities end there. From a marble chair a robed statue of Chief Justice Roger Brooke Taney gazes down the historic capitol lawn. It is usually quiet there, with old shade trees and lush green grass. A short distance down the hill lies the harbor, where boats under full sail or motor's hum ply the Chesapeake waters. Taney's counterpart stands young and vital amid a group sculpture of African American students on the opposite side of the capitol. Sculpted when he served as the chief counsel for the NAACP on the eve of the historic *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, Thurgood Marshall greets the hordes of tourists before they climb the steps to enter America's oldest continuously used state legislative chambers. The Marshall sculptures occupy the middle of "Lawyers Mall," with Government House, the governor's official residence, on the south side, the Legislative Services Building on the north, and the state capitol to the east. The sculptures mark the focal point of Maryland state government.

Taney's career spanned half a century of political activism as he rose from the Maryland House of Delegates to the nation's highest court. Though he personally abhorred slavery, he signed the infamous *Dred Scott v. Sandford* (1857) decision that held American blacks had "no rights which any white man was bound to respect."[1] Marshall, born in Baltimore,

was the first African American appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court, serving from 1967 to 1991. Justice Marshall championed liberal judicial activism on the nation's highest court, arguing for First Amendment freedoms, the rights of individuals, and affirmative action. Together these iconic figures represent the diversity and paradoxes of Maryland past, present, and future.

Maryland's development has long reflected its considerable geographic and demographic diversity as well as the crosscurrents between North and South. Described accurately as a "cartographer's nightmare," Maryland is also something of a political scientist's dilemma.[2] Sometimes depicted as the southernmost northern state and sometimes as the northernmost southern state, in many regards Maryland acts like neither and defies most conventional categorizations. A small state in land area, ranking forty-second in the country, Maryland contained 5,773,552 people in the 2010 census, placing it nineteenth among the fifty states. With the second highest median household income in the nation from 2005 to 2007 and ranking fifth in population density in the nation, it is far more affluent and urbanized than other border states.[3] Established Maryland public policies on affirmative action, environmental protection, gun control, health care, and abortion rights are considerably more progressive than those in the states included in the "South Atlantic" grouping devised by the U.S. Census Bureau. Maryland is also decidedly more dominated by Democrats than most states in the Northeast or Mid-Atlantic regional blocs. Contemporary political pundits complain of the "ambiguous identity" of Maryland.[4] Indeed as early as 1776 the essence of Maryland befuddled such an astute political analyst as John Adams, who confessed, "It is so eccentric a colony—sometimes so hot, sometimes so cold, now so high, then so low—that I know not what to say about or expect from it."[5]
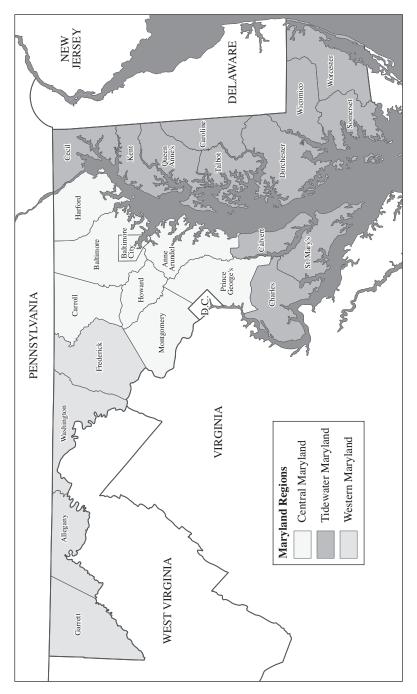
The Maryland way seems to confound patterns of consistent political predictability. Maryland was the first colony to establish religious tolerance as government policy, and then repeal it. It was the first border state to abolish slavery, yet rejected ratification of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments in 1867 and 1870, only symbolically ratifying these civil rights amendments in 1959 and 1973. The Progressive Era brought a host of election reforms; however, the national women's suffrage movement was perceived as a major threat to the male political establishment. The Maryland General Assembly, fixated on states' rights, overwhelmingly rejected ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920. While Maryland is a national leader in boards and commissions enforcing stringent governmental ethics regulations, the state has periodically seen unsavory political corruption at

both high and low levels, making one twentieth-century period a veritable "postmark for corruption."[6]

The gubernatorial election of 2002 was another case manifesting the state's perplexing nature. After eight consecutive Democratic gubernatorial victories, the longest winning streak in Maryland history, Republican Congressman Robert Ehrlich defeated Democratic Lieutenant Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend. He was the first of his party the state had seen since Spiro Agnew was elected in 1966. The same election witnessed a significant change in the Maryland congressional delegation. For ten years deadlocked with four Democrats balanced by four Republican members serving in the U.S. House of Representatives, the Democrats picked up two seats, giving them a 6–2 advantage. In 2002 Maryland was the only state where Democrats gained more than one congressional seat from their opponents in a decidedly Republican year. Four years later Ehrlich was decisively defeated for reelection by Baltimore City Mayor Martin J. O'Malley and was the only incumbent governor of either party in the nation rejected by voters during the 2006 general election. In the 2008 presidential election Maryland Democrats added a seventh congressional seat (the first district, comprising the nine Eastern Shore counties and parts of Anne Arundel, Baltimore, and Harford counties), and Barack Obama received the fourth highest margin of victory for a presidential candidate in Maryland since the two-party election era began in the nineteenth century. In the 2010 gubernatorial election, incumbent Governor O'Malley easily defeated Ehrlich, again counter to national trends.

Even the state nickname remains somewhat unsettled. Displayed on the U.S. Mint's state series quarter is the oldest, "The Old Line State," dating to the American Revolution, when the Maryland Line, the four hundred–strong state militia, covered the retreat of Washington's army during the Battle of Long Island in 1776.[7] Another nickname, "The Free State," stems from the Prohibition era, when many of Maryland's elected officials and much of its public openly ignored the "noble experiment." The federal Bureau of Prohibition complained, "We have no cooperation in the State of Maryland."[8] The Free State nickname was popularized by the *Baltimore Sun*, especially its most iconoclastic reporter, H. L. Mencken, and it remains in use today mainly in media sources.

Undoubtedly the appellation most popular with the Maryland tourist industry is "America in Miniature," reflecting the state's distinct geographic regions. These range from the coastal plains of Southern Maryland and the Eastern Shore to the Appalachian hinterlands of Western Maryland and the sprawling metropolitan areas of Baltimore and Washington DC, with a mul-

Map 1-1. Maryland regions

titude of suburbs and edge cities along the Interstate 95 corridor that connects them. Founded on simple geography, the state has a regional diversity whose demographic, economic, and political differences reflect to some extent national patterns.

TIDEWATER: THE EASTERN SHORE AND SOUTHERN MARYLAND

The 195-mile-long, 3,237-square-mile Chesapeake Bay, the largest estuary on the North American continent, cuts deeply into and divides the Maryland landmass into the eastern and western shores. Formed from the prehistoric drowned valley of the lower Susquehanna River, the Chesapeake ranges from three to twenty-five miles wide and is punctuated by a multitude of rivers and tidal creeks. The Bay is Maryland's single most distinctive geographic feature. The Eastern Shore, part of the larger Delmarva Peninsula shared with Delaware and Virginia, contains nine Maryland counties (Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester). Together with the three southernmost counties of the Western Shore (Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's), they display a similar flat topography, the eroded heritage of an ancient Miocene-epoch sea. The Tidewater is predominately rural; though it contains half of the state's counties, it accounts for less than 14 percent of the total state population. Twenty percent of Tidewater residents are African American.

It was in the Tidewater region that the initial colonization of Maryland took place. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the region attracted settlers drawn by the abundant and fertile land, the seafood bounty of the Bay, and the meandering rivers that provided easy water transit for goods and supplies. In effect the Chesapeake was "one expansive port," and concentrated settlements were the exception rather than the rule.[9] For much of Maryland's early history these counties were bolstered by a robust plantation tobacco economy that produced much of the state's wealth and growth. This tobacco monoculture and plantation society came at considerable human costs. Slavery flourished in the Tidewater region; by 1790 close to 60 percent of all slaves living in Maryland worked there, comprising over 40 percent of the region's population.[10] Most Marylanders lived in this region during the first few generations of colonial settlement; a plurality, 44 percent, still resided in the Tidewater at the time of the 1800 Census. But population growth slowed considerably in the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth in comparison to other regions (see Table 1-1).

Along the Chesapeake's edge, in the myriad creeks and tidal estuaries, crabs, fish, oysters, and waterfowl provided a living for generations of wa-

Table 1-1: Maryland regional populations

Region	1800	1850	1900	1950	2000
Tidewater Maryland	149,550	168,010	241,071	275,249	677,223
	44%	29%	20%	12%	13%
Western Maryland	56,476	94,604	168,448	251,988	431,976
	17%	16%	14%	12%	8%
Central Maryland	135,522	320,420	778,525	1,815,764	4,187,287
	40%	55%	66%	77%	79%
Total Maryland Population	341,548	583,034	1,188,044	2,343,001	5,296,486

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

termen and their families. This once largely subsistence economy boomed shortly after the Civil War, when the Chesapeake Bay oyster was transformed into the primary cash crop of the region. The growing national railroad network and innovations in the canning industry fueled the bonanza, especially in the town of Crisfield, just north of the Virginia border on the lower Eastern Shore. There oyster shucking and canning facilities abounded. At the zenith of the oyster age, in 1884, fifteen million bushels of oysters were harvested, and Crisfield was home port to more than six hundred oyster boats that dredged or tonged the Bay bottoms and bars.[11] The inevitable overharvesting, as well as water pollution and increased sedimentation, reduced the once prolific oyster bars to largely barren outcroppings on the Bay's bottom. For much of the twentieth century Chesapeake Bay watermen turned to the blue crab, though here too environmental degradation of the Bay has considerably reduced crustacean stocks and shortened seasons. Tightening size and catch limits has often set the state government and the watermen communities at political loggerheads.

Separated from the rest of Maryland by the Bay, the Eastern Shore has been described as "the most self-conscious" area in the state.[12] To defuse the periodic outbursts of separatist sentiment (which once in the 1830s prompted the Delaware legislature to propose a merger) the governorship was rotated regionally from 1838 until 1864, and the two Maryland seats in the U.S. Senate were divided between the Western and Eastern Shores by the state legislature from 1789 until 1896. Eastern Shore secession remains an issue, but not a serious one. Occasionally a delegate or state senator will file a separation bill, but does so more for the inevitable publicity and as reinforcement of regional pride and identity than with serious intent.

The three southern counties were equally detached by customs, if not geography, from the rest of the Western Shore for most of the state's histo-

ry. A southern-style conservatism, complete with courthouse political ma-
chines that ran the counties with a certain degree of moral laxity, dominat-
ed for generations. By local ordinance slot machines were legal in Calvert,
Charles, and St. Mary's counties, and also Anne Arundel County, from the
1940s well into the 1960s. They were scattered throughout the area, in res-
taurants, package stores, motels, and virtually every bar. Small-time graft
and corruption flourished in this poorly regulated enterprise and pervaded
some aspects of local governance in the mid-twentieth century.

   The Eastern Shore and Southern Maryland produced a disproportionate
share of the state's early master politicians from 1776 until the First World
War. Throughout most of the twentieth century modernization bypassed the
area, and the politics of the Tidewater grew more distant and aloof from
and more reactionary toward the state norm; residents often voted Demo-
cratic for local and state offices but Republican in national elections. While
the central core of Maryland grew and prospered, growth was perceived
not as an opportunity but as a threat to the established order. When the first
Chesapeake Bay Bridge was debated in 1947, much of the Eastern Shore
delegation in the general assembly was fiercely opposed. In the small towns
and tidewater hamlets people sang, "We don't give a damn for the whole
state of Maryland / We're from the Eastern Shore!"[13] Their opposition was
brushed aside and the bridge was constructed, opening Maryland's short
Atlantic coast to tourist hordes. With the completion of the second span
in 1973, the Eastern Shore became even more accessible. Recreational ac-
tivities joined agribusiness and seafood as the region's primary economic
pursuits. In a substantial reversal of long-term trends, the 1980s and 1990s
brought dynamic population growth to the Coastal Plain counties near the
eastern terminus of the twin Bay Bridges. Suburban sprawl, long-distance
commuting, and new retirement communities produced a 23 percent in-
crease in population from 1980 to 1990 and 20 percent in the 1990s, almost
double the state average for the two decades.

   This sometimes explosive growth sprang from different sources. South-
ern Maryland was and remains under the influence of Washington met-
ropolitan development. For example, the population of Charles County
expanded from 23,415 in 1950 to 120,546 in 2000, more than a fivefold in-
crease, with another 21.6 percent jump to 146,551 in 2010. In neighboring
St. Mary's County the sprawling Patuxent Naval Air Station and research
facilities helped push the population from 14,626 in 1950 to 86,211 in
2000, and to 105,151 in 2010. On the Eastern Shore, Annapolis, and even
metropolitan Baltimore and Washington commuters have been attracted by
open spaces, good roads, low crime rates, and some of the lowest prop-

erty tax rates in the state. Suburbanization was accompanied by a growth in Republican registration and electoral victories at all levels in the region. Today most parts of the Eastern Shore and Southern Maryland, with the exception of Charles County, are something of an equal conservative political partner to Western Maryland, on the other geographic end of the state, in their support for statewide Republican candidates.

THE HIGHLANDS: WESTERN MARYLAND

Westward across the length of the state, in the time-worn Catoctin and Appalachian Mountains, are the four counties, Allegany, Frederick, Garrett, and Washington, conventionally considered Western Maryland, the last settled region of the state. The highest point in Maryland is found in its westernmost subdivision, Garrett County. There Hoye Crest on Backbone Mountain tops off at 3,360 feet, which by most national and international standards is hardly mountainous. Yet for settlers coming from the Maryland Coastal Plain or Piedmont areas, the geographic ridges of Western Maryland appeared very high indeed.

The Western Maryland region has never accounted for even 20 percent of the state's population, and today holds only slightly more than 8 percent (see Table 1-1). Western Maryland shares with the Eastern Shore and Southern Maryland a sense of protracted distance from state power and concern. Although it is the most racially homogeneous area in the state, with an African American population of over 8 percent, the politics of Western Maryland are based on a diverse combination of ethnic, class, and occupational cleavages.

The region was settled initially in the 1700s by English and Scots farmers from Maryland's Eastern Shore and Virginia as well as German immigrants who farmed the fertile rolling hills and sheltered valleys. The mixed farming economy in the valleys was quickly augmented by the exploitation of other natural resources. George Washington was one of the first to observe that the region was blessed with abundant and easily mined surface beds of bituminous coal, which he called "the fuel of the future."[14]

The development of the region was a consequence of American westward expansion and Marylanders' desire to promote trade and commerce with the Ohio Valley. The transportation infrastructure of Western Maryland received a substantial boost in 1807, when Congress appropriated funds for the National Road, or Cumberland Road. Originally a wagon trail, it ran from Cumberland in Allegany County to Wheeling, West Virginia, and was the first "internal improvement" funded by the federal government. The

Maryland General Assembly provided substantial financial support for the construction of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal along the Potomac River as well as the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. In addition the state legislature incorporated a dozen mining companies in the region from 1828 to 1838.[15] Industrial development followed these ventures as factories, mills, and mines attracted waves of Irish, Welsh, German, and Scots Irish, both immigrants and native-born. Miners were much more likely to be foreign-born as mine owners recruited experienced workers from Europe.[16]

With an established transportation grid, Western Maryland became a nationally significant initial economic gateway to the Ohio Valley and helped fuel Baltimore's industrial expansion. The B&O Railroad shipped 193,000 tons of coal to Baltimore in 1850, which escalated to 493,000 tons in 1860.[17] The C&O Canal, with five hundred canal boats in operation, carried a record-setting 973,805 tons of freight in 1875.[18] Hagerstown in Washington County has long served as a transportation center and crossroads. Nicknamed "Hub City" for the six railroad lines that met there, Hagerstown links the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia with Maryland and central Pennsylvania through the Great Valley of Appalachia. Significant family businesses developed in the larger towns of Cumberland, Frederick, and Hagerstown and smaller neighboring towns, including glass works, tanneries, cement plants, canneries, and knitting mills.

This region was by far the most pro-Union during the Civil War. Republican sentiments were eventually balanced by Western Maryland industrial workers, who formed the core constituency of a powerful and enduring labor union movement in the late nineteenth century and twentieth century. The region suffered during the Great Depression and recovered somewhat during the production boom of the World War II, but was continually plagued by plant closings in the second half of the twentieth century. This is especially true of Allegany County, which has steadily lost population since 1950. In that year's census the county had a population of 89,556; by 2000 the number had declined to 74,930, with a slight increase to 75,087 in 2010.

Efforts to improve economic vitality in the two westernmost counties (Allegany and Garrett) have focused on the development and promotion of recreational opportunities and even the construction of state correctional facilities, public works projects that often produce a NIMBY ("Not in my backyard") reaction in more prosperous sections of the state.

In contrast to the economic malaise in Garrett, Allegany, and Washington counties is the thriving easternmost member of this region, Frederick County. Containing 233,385 people, according to the 2010 census, Frederick is the most heavily populated county in the region. Its growth rate

from 1990 to 2000 was 23 percent, the third highest in the state. Southern Frederick became an increasingly popular residence for Washington metro commuters and for workers employed in the technology corridor along Interstate 270 in Montgomery County. Suburban issues such as land use and schools began to supplant traditional rural concerns. In addition Frederick County hosts the U.S. Army's sprawling biomedical research center, Fort Detrick, and the world-renowned presidential retreat, Camp David.

Politically Western Maryland produced the only stable, long-term, two-party competitive system at the state legislative and local levels for much of the twentieth century. Political contests in the region, where even the fluoridation of the water supply remains a contentious issue, almost always pit conservative Democrats against even more conservative Republicans. Although Democrats certainly remain competitive in the towns and more densely populated legislative districts, Republicans now win most races in this region. Similar to the Tidewater area, family allegiances and long-term ties to the Western Maryland region have been of considerable importance. Two generations of the Byron family, both husbands and wives, served as Democratic members of the House of Representatives from Maryland's Sixth Congressional District. Conservative Republican Roscoe Bartlett, who succeeded the last Byron in 1992 and was reelected to a tenth term in 2010, is Western Maryland's congressman. In federal and statewide elections at the beginning of the twenty-first century Western Maryland voters have reliably produced large Republican majority margins.

THE MIDSTATE MAJORITY: CENTRAL MARYLAND

The economic, social, and political drive wheel of Maryland is the Piedmont region of the Western Shore, its original topography of rolling forested hills and fields now mostly obscured by urban and suburban developments. In 1800 this area accounted for 40 percent of the state's population; in 2000 almost 80 percent of Marylanders called this region home (see Table 1-1). Central Maryland contains 88 percent of the state's African American population and is over 40 percent nonwhite according to the 2010 census.

Statewide electoral outcomes reflect the growth and population dominance of this region. The six Maryland governors since 1967 and all U.S. senators since 1976 have resided in this region. The central core consists of two major metropolitan areas, Baltimore and Washington, connected by the Interstate 95 corridor. The Baltimore area, consisting of a central city and surrounding suburbs, provided a classic case in the second half of the

twentieth century of a declining urban base and prosperous suburban ring. The Washington metropolitan area contains the first and second most populous counties in the state. Montgomery is one of the nation's most wealthy, large urban subdivisions, and Prince George's is home to the most highly educated and affluent majority African American population in the country. Together with Baltimore City, Montgomery and Prince George's counties form the core urban base of Democratic voters in the state. Two Central Maryland subdivisions, fast-growing Carroll and Harford counties, are almost exclusively suburban and predominantly white and provide a conservative Republican block of votes in the region. The three remaining subdivisions—Anne Arundel, Baltimore, and Howard counties—were the focus of shifting party fortunes in the last third of the twentieth century. Baltimore County and Howard County have recently trended more Democratic, while Anne Arundel remains a two-party competitive jurisdiction.

The economy of Central Maryland is exceptionally diverse, ranging from federal installations in the Washington metropolitan area such as the National Institutes of Health and National Aeronautics and Space Administration and biotechnology ventures at the Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore City to corporate manufacturing facilities such as Black and Decker and Severstal Steel in Baltimore County and Northrop Grumman in Anne Arundel County. An educated and skilled labor force has helped make the I-95 corridor one of the most attractive in the country for startup businesses, and the region's intellectual capital is an increasingly vital asset. In the 2000 census Maryland ranked first among the states in percentage (26.4) of professional and management workers and placed third among the states in percentage (31.4) of the population age twenty-five and over with at least a bachelor's degree.[19]

Even with the proliferation of biotech, software, and other twenty-first-century ventures and venues, one element has remained the same since the early 1800s: the geographic transportation advantage of Baltimore. Situated farther west than any other East Coast seaport, the Port of Baltimore remains a vital component of the state economy. Container ships have replaced the Baltimore clippers, allowing international commerce valued at $41.9 billion (in 2007) to pass through port terminals. Ranking ninth in the country, the Port of Baltimore directly employs 18,400 and indirectly supports an additional 107,900 in the labor force.[20] In addition the Baltimore-Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport, located eighteen miles from downtown Baltimore in the heart of the I-95 corridor, is the second fastest growing airport in the country and serves as a hub for Southwest Airlines.

Explosive growth in the I-95 corridor and the resulting education, transportation, housing, and environmental issues have occupied center stage in Maryland politics since the Second World War. Maryland was a veritable staging area for the arsenal of democracy during the war years, and migration into the state was massive for nearly thirty years afterward. From 1940 to 1970 the state jumped from twenty-eighth in population to eighteenth, a surge that mirrored that of distant Sunbelt states. The state's 27 percent population increase during the 1960s was twice the national average. In 1961 Governor Millard Tawes noted the urgency to "reckon . . . with sheer numbers," and most governors since have felt the same pressure.[21] The bulk of the growth was focused in the Baltimore and Washington metropolitan suburbs, where populations doubled from 1946 to 1951, doubled again from 1951 to 1961, and doubled yet a third time from 1961 to 1981.[22] Growth slowed somewhat in the 1990s, when the population increased 11 percent, to 5,296,486, compared to a national increase of 13 percent. The resulting congested highways, neighborhoods, and schools will remain problems for decades.

Central Maryland political styles vary considerably. Montgomery and Howard counties form the base of an idealistic, reform-driven approach. Both have experienced explosive growth since 1950, with Montgomery becoming the most populous subdivision in Maryland; it had 971,777 residents according to 2010 census. Howard had only 23,119 people in 1950 and was seventeenth in population out of twenty-four subdivisions; after the 2010 census Howard contained 287,085 residents and ranked sixth. In both counties the new arrivals have been predominantly affluent and well educated, influencing local public policy. Howard, for example, was the first Maryland subdivision to mandate bike helmets for youngsters and in 2007 launched the Healthy Howard Plan, a national model program to extend health coverage to its uninsured adult citizens.[23] Columbia, the enlightened famed developer Jim Rouse's acclaimed "new town," consists of clustered villages bound by deeded restrictive covenants and exemplifies community-based planning and regulation. There are no billboards in Columbia, and mailboxes are often grouped together so neighbors will have an opportunity to interact.[24] Montgomery County liberalism is a given in Maryland politics. Montgomery prizes an exacting rectitude in political morality above all else in its elected officials and consistently supports "civil rights, welfare, consumer and environmentalist legislation."[25]

Professional politicians may still be found in portions of Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and Prince George's County, where a dwindling number of old-style Democratic organizations make politics pay. Former Baltimore

mayor Thomas D'Alesandro once summarized the prevalent 1950s attitude this way: "Let the Republicans have the two-party system, give the Democrats the political jobs."[26] That mind-set often came with a price: political corruption. Maryland was plagued with investigations, indictments, and convictions of prominent Democratic and Republican politicians during the 1960s and 1970s. Reform Democrats sometimes capitalized on such misfortunes, as did an occasional Republican at the local level.

The dynamics of Maryland policymaking are often based on the interplay between a reformist imperative to improve society and the more guarded, practical-minded political temperament. The outputs of the resultant conflict and compromise between diverse interests and principles are often progressive yet pragmatic policies. Politicians who understand this, and can manage the process, succeed. For example, in 1968, when Maryland voters rejected a boldly progressive state constitution, it was the machine-bred governor Marvin Mandel who helped orchestrate a piecemeal acceptance of many of the modernized reorganization proposals through the general assembly and subsequent ratification by the voters.

The result of this political dynamic is a policy system that proceeds with well-crafted and thought-out policies, often innovative yet realistic in scope. These policies range across the spectrum, from Maryland's much acclaimed Smart Growth land use and environmental initiatives to progressive health care programs. Even with often activist policy stances Maryland has long held the coveted triple-A bond rating from Wall Street, reflective of an underlying and consistent fiscal prudence.[27]

UNDERSTANDING MARYLAND POLITICS

Three major factors characterize Maryland politics: growing diversity, long-term Democratic Party dominance of the state government, and the sheer pragmatism of that party, its leaders, and its policies through nearly a century and a half of political and governmental control.

At first glance Maryland may seem paradoxical, inconsistent, and ambiguous. But what is at work is not simple contrariness, but diversity. By virtue of participation differentials—who votes and which groups dominate in decision making—diversity itself can produce multiple and conflicting outcomes that a more homogeneous state would find bewildering. Maryland's diversity operates on three levels. First is demographic diversity. As a refuge for assorted groups since its origin, Maryland has had a heterogeneous collection of people and continues to attract more. Fully one-third of the state's population growth in the 1990s came from foreign-born immi-

grants. The 1,700,298 African American residents enumerated by the 2010 census ranked fifth in the nation for percentage of population (29.4).[28] The rapid growth of Hispanic (8.2 percent) and Asian (5.5 percent) populations in the 1990s has continued into the twenty-first century. The now 58 percent white majority contains multiple ethnic identities, reflecting the panoply of European immigration over four centuries. Religious diversity is present as well. While Protestant affiliations claim the majority of Maryland's citizens, the state was founded by the Catholic Lord Calvert, and a significant Roman Catholic minority has been present since colonial times. The state also has more than 235,000 Jewish residents, earning the ranking of eighth in the nation.[29]

The second level of diversity is displayed by Maryland's economy, which spans traditional folk craft artisans of the Appalachian valleys, farmers on the Eastern Shore, civil servants at the Social Security Administration Headquarters in Baltimore County, and research scientists at Johns Hopkins University and the University of Maryland. The state's labor force distribution reflects the diversity of jobs and occupations.[30] Approximately 19 percent of the labor force is within the public sector. Of these 479,115 workers during the second quarter of 2008, 53 percent were employed by local governments and 21 percent by the state. Over 26 percent of government-sector workers were employed by the federal government. The private sector accounts for over 81 percent of total employment. Maryland has a fully developed service economy; nearly 85 percent of private-sector employment is classified as "service providing." Only 12.3 percent of the workforce was producing tangible goods in 2008. In the private sector professional and business services are the largest grouping of jobs in the state, at 19.3 percent. Next, at over 18 percent, are trade, transportation, and utilities, followed by education and health services (14 percent), leisure and hospitality services (9.5 percent), construction (7 percent), financial activities (6 percent), manufacturing (only 5 percent), and information services (2 percent).

The third significant category of diversity derives from the geography of Maryland, which produces a wide array of environmental pressures. State policymakers must respond not only to declining fish and shellfish stocks in the Chesapeake Bay, but also chronic and complex urban pollution in Baltimore, acidic runoff from abandoned mines in Western Maryland, and poultry waste on the Eastern Shore. This physical diversity is amplified by social and economic diversity. Differences in class, race, religion, and ethnicity were once accented by a well-defined regionalism, although sustained population growth in the central core of the state and significant par-

tisan changes have redefined the relative importance of traditional regional divisions. Yet although the three regions—the Eastern Shore and Southern Maryland Tidewater, the Highlands of Western Maryland, and the populous Central Maryland core of the state—help explain the state geographically, they fall short as a basis for political analysis. Nor is the conflict between the urban, suburban, and rural subdivisions sufficient to explain the shift in the state's party affiliation. A new paradigm for Maryland politics, a "two Marylands" approach, is necessary. A description of the growing and intensifying polarization between Maryland Democrats and Republicans is detailed and discussed throughout this text.

The second major factor characterizing Maryland politics is the persistent dominance of the Democratic Party in public affairs. In the thirty-seven gubernatorial elections conducted since 1867 Maryland Democratic candidates have won thirty times, a success rate of 81.1 percent. In the twentieth century eight Democratic governors were elected for two or more terms, compared to only one Republican governor. Democratic dominance has been even greater in the state legislature, the Maryland General Assembly. Beginning with the legislative session of 1868 Democrats have controlled the state senate in every year but two (1898–99) and been the majority in the house of delegates for every year but six (1896–99 and 1918–19). Republicans held majorities in both chambers only once, for a single legislative session following the elections of 1897. Maryland Republicans generated a surge in electoral competitiveness at virtually every level of state and local government in the late 1980s, culminating in the election of Robert Ehrlich in 2002. However, the gain of Government House, the chief executive's Annapolis mansion, was reversed in 2006 by the Democratic mayor of Baltimore City, Martin O'Malley, who handily defeated Ehrlich's reelection bid. Statewide Democratic dominance had returned and was strongly reinforced in 2010, when O'Malley doubled his 2006 victory margin in a rematch with Ehrlich. The Republican goal of establishing a two-party competitive system at the state level was deferred yet again.

The final major factor explaining Maryland politics has been an underlying political pragmatism exercised by state Democratic elected leaders in keeping with a very utilitarian approach to politics and policies. This pragmatism, a consequences-based approach to governing rather than an ideological one, also resonates with what historians identify as a central trait of the Maryland character: a "middle temperament" of "compromise and accommodation" quite in keeping with the diverse backgrounds and interests of the state population.[31] In tune with the times, Maryland Democrats were generally conservative, fiscally prudent, and minimalist in state services

for almost a century following the Civil War. With the advent of the New Deal and the Roosevelt realignment, those themes became less relevant and politically productive, and state Democrats moved to a more activist state model, advancing programs and regulations that reflected the changes in Maryland after World War II. Many of these policies are progressive and in keeping with the expressed interests of Democratic support groups. Pragmatism has made the Maryland Democratic Party positively adaptive to changing socioeconomic conditions in the past, the present, and, presumably, the future.

TWO MARYLANDS

Politically there are two Marylands today. Democratic Maryland is multiracial and multiethnic and spans all socioeconomic classes. This Maryland straddles the I-95 corridor that transects the most heavily populated and racially integrated sections and connects the Baltimore and Washington metropolitan areas. These communities are either urban or suburban, with population densities exceeding 1,500 people per square mile or greater. The majority of Maryland's African American citizens live in this corridor and vote overwhelmingly Democratic. White voters in this area support Democrats as well, although at reduced levels. The core subdivisions of the Democratic base are vote-rich Baltimore City, Montgomery County, and Prince George's County, where statewide Democratic candidates routinely win with 60 to 80 percent of the vote, providing a substantial foundation for electoral dominance. Additional urban and suburban Democratic bases of support are scattered across the remainder of the state in such cities and places as Cumberland, Frederick, and Hagerstown in Western Maryland; Cambridge, Chestertown, Salisbury, and Princess Anne on the Eastern Shore; Leonardtown and Waldorf in Southern Maryland; and Annapolis, Columbia, Owings Mills, and Randallstown in Central Maryland.

Republican Maryland is predominantly rural or suburban, predominantly white, and increasingly conservative. Much of the Maryland Tidewater and Western Maryland counties now fall within this category in statewide elections. In Central Maryland, Carroll County and Harford County are virtual citadels of Republican strength in county, state, and federal elections.

The early twenty-first-century Maryland Republican Party is different from decades past, when the party was often progressive in comparison to the more fiscally and socially conservative Democrats who usually defeated their candidates. Contemporary Republican candidates, especially statewide and legislative, are more likely to reflect the policy positions of their national party: pro-business, antigovernment, antitax, anti-abortion, and

strongly protective of gun and property rights. Their opposition to Democratic dominance is deep-seated, and the level of political polarization produced by this challenge is notably more intense and spirited than in modern Maryland history.

Maryland politics has never been sedate, but the clash of partisan politics in the twenty-first century has increased in every election cycle as negative campaign tactics have proliferated and percolated down from national elections to statewide, legislative, and even local contests. Governing, never an easy task, has become more demanding as elective, administrative, and judicial leaders confront the pressures of a diverse polity in the context of this partisan polarization. It is in the multiple decisions of the three governmental branches of its state and local units that the continual redefining of the Maryland identity takes place. The succeeding chapters detail that process and its results.