



**J. JOSEPH CURRAN, JR.**  
"The Conscience of Maryland"

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**Born July 7, 1931, West Palm Beach, Florida**

**University of Baltimore, 1956**

**University of Baltimore School of Law, LL.B., 1959**

**Service in U.S. Air Force during Korean war, 1951 - 1955**

**Maryland House of Delegates, 1959-1962**

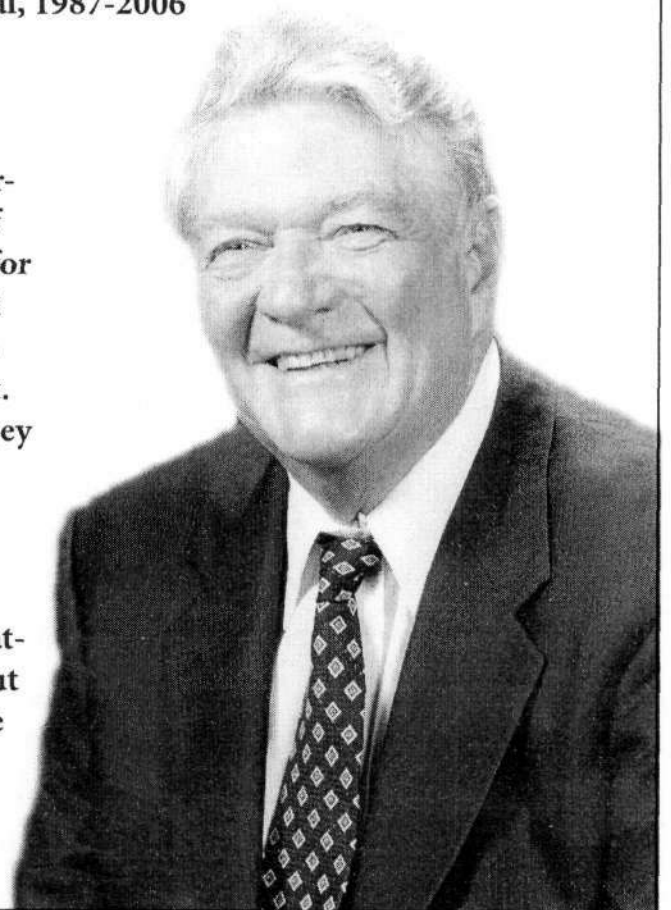
**Maryland Senate, 1963-1982**

**Lt. Governor under Governor Harry R. Hughes, 1983-1986**

**Attorney General, 1987-2006**

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS**

Throughout his almost half century of public service, Mr. Curran has worked tirelessly on behalf of those least able to help themselves. Fighting for people with unequal power is at the core of what he has been about as a leader of unparalleled integrity - first in the General Assembly, then as Lt. Governor, and for the last two decades as Attorney General. From his efforts on behalf of children at risk and vulnerable seniors, to his campaigns against racial inequality, gun violence, domestic abuse, big tobacco, and consumer exploitation, Curran has stood always for what is right, no matter who the opponent. He has battled throughout to make Maryland a better place for all who have lacked a voice and needed a champion.



## **COURAGEOUS LEADER**

Curran's career has been marked by an unwavering courage to take the unpopular stand when the cause was just. While always willing and able to seek compromise when appropriate, he never flinched from putting his personal integrity and career on the line to speak out for what he believed was right. Examples abound:

**Racial and Gender Equality:** Curran fiercely supported the advancement of racial equality, from public accommodations laws - which permitted, for example, African Americans to go to the movies - to open housing laws requiring the sale of homes to people regardless of color. Curran's own home in Baltimore City, with his wife and children inside, was picketed in 1967 in retaliation for his stance on open housing. As chair of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee, Curran also called for striking Maryland's law against interracial marriage and fought for the Equal Rights Amendment. As Attorney General, Curran has hired and promoted more women and minorities than any other Attorney General in Maryland history.

**Viet Nam War:** Well before virtually any national or local politician had the nerve to say so, Curran ran for Congress in 1968 on a platform calling for withdrawal of our troops in the Viet Nam war.

**Right to Privacy:** Despite his strong Catholic faith and the views of many constituents, Curran made the personally difficult decision to speak out early on behalf of the constitutional right to privacy from which flows a woman's right to make reproductive choices.

**Crusade against Gun Violence:** From his earliest days in the General Assembly, Curran faced down the gun lobby again and again in his battle to reduce gun violence. Having felt first-hand what so many families suffer when his own father died in the aftermath of the 1976 shooting at City Hall in Baltimore, Curran sought laws giving more tools to law enforcement to keep guns out of the wrong hands. He pushed for handgun permits, laws to clamp down on straw purchases, and a waiting period before gun sales. In 1988, he led the referendum to ban Saturday night specials. In 1999, he broke new ground in his report, *A Farewell to Arms*, by calling for a re-examination of widespread private handgun ownership.

**Death Penalty:** Dismissing opponents' charges that failing to champion the death penalty was "soft on crime," Curran opposed capital punishment from the beginning of his career. In 2003, he called for its abolition because of the inevitability that its continued use would lead to an irrevocable mistake - the execution of an innocent person. He called that eventuality "unworthy" of our system of criminal justice.

**Casino Gambling:** Since his comprehensive 1995 study, *The House Never Loses and Maryland Cannot Win*, Curran has been a consistent leader in opposing efforts to bring slot machine and casino gambling to the State. His conclusion that the costs of slot machines would far outweigh the benefits has since been supported by substantial academic scholarship.

**Important Legal Reforms:** Curran's steady and able hand made possible innumerable pieces of legislation which put Maryland at the forefront of national efforts to modernize many aspects of our legal system. He lent the weight of his authority to bills which created Maryland's Court of Special Appeals and the District Court system, and which reformed Maryland's laws regarding alimony and divorce, adoption and guardianship, and medical malpractice. He was instrumental in the establishment of the Foster Care Review Board, which streamlined the often lengthy process of adoption for children in foster care. He worked over many years to toughen drunk-driving laws. In response to the movement to abolish the insanity defense in the wake of the shooting of President Reagan, Curran led the successful effort to reform rather than do away with the defense.

### **CONSUMER ADVOCATE**

In his decades-long crusade on behalf of consumers, which has resulted in over \$100 million in recoveries, Curran has gone after deceptive and predatory practices of all kinds. He has stopped companies from charging low-income Marylanders 700% interest on unconscionable loans, shut down businesses exploiting the hopes and fears of cancer patients by peddling phony treatments, and cleaned up deceptive sales and repair schemes in the automobile industry. Other examples include his leadership of a multi-state effort that stopped Publisher's Clearinghouse from bilking elderly citizens through misleading prize offers, and his efforts to stop "flipping," where companies deceived unsophisticated first-time homebuyers into purchasing houses for far more than their value. He also promoted legislation, among the first of its kind, to prevent nursing homes from summarily ejecting indigent residents.

**Prescription Drug Website:** To help the hundreds of thousands of Marylanders who lack health insurance, Mr. Curran created a first-of-its-kind drug pricing website which allows consumers to compare retail prices charged by different pharmacies for commonly-used prescription drugs. Many other states have replicated this innovative program.

### **STATE'S CHIEF LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER**

Through both his personal representation of the State in federal and state appellate courts, and through the work of his nationally-recognized enforcement and criminal appeals divisions, Curran has waged a hard-fought battle against crime, Medicaid and securities fraud, and antitrust violations.

**Supreme Court Cases:** Curran has brought his advocacy skills to the Supreme Court, winning two cases which expanded the authority of law enforcement and the ability to prosecute child abuse. In *Maryland v. Wilson*, the Court agreed with Curran that police officers must have the ability to order passengers out of a lawfully-stopped vehicle when necessary to protect the officers. In *Maryland v. Craig*, the Court upheld Maryland's law allowing child victims of abuse to testify via one-way television so as not to be forced to face their abusers.

**Antitrust Enforcement:** Curran has been a leader in going after a range of industries for anti-competitive behavior harmful to Maryland consumers. He recovered more than \$5 million in multiple suits against Bristol-Myers Squibb and other pharmaceutical companies for keeping lower cost, generic competitors out of the market through abuse of patent laws, price-fixing and monopoly schemes. Curran also recovered millions for consumers, charities and the State's general fund in actions for retail price-fixing against many manufacturers of electronic and other products, including compact discs, Minolta cameras, Mitsubishi televisions, Nintendo video game consoles, and Reebok shoes. Other significant victories included a multistate suit against Aetna, Harford, Lloyds of London and 29 other insurance companies for illegally conspiring to keep local governments from obtaining liability insurance, and a case which opened up competition with cable programming for alternative technologies. Another multistate suit against Johnson & Johnson, Bausch and Lomb and other contact lenses manufacturers for boycotts which kept prices high and consumers' choices limited brought in more than one million dollars. As a result of a national lawsuit against Toys "R" Us and other toy manufacturers, Curran distributed over \$1 million worth of toys and books for low-income Maryland children.

**White Collar Crime:** Curran has obtained hundreds of convictions of white collar criminals and millions of dollars in restitution for public corruption, health care and Medicaid fraud, insurance fraud, tax evasion, embezzlement, and the exploitation of vulnerable adults. A recent example is a corruption investigation in which seven ex-state employees were sentenced to jail and ordered to pay restitution for accepting bribes from a Florida cleaning supply company, Stone Cold Chemicals. Curran's "Operation Crime Gun" has also resulted in scores of convictions for gun trafficking and illegal handgun purchases.

**Prescription Drug Abuse:** After releasing a report on the growing problem of prescription drug abuse in Maryland, Curran developed the law, enacted in 2006, which is the State's blueprint for a prescription monitoring program to help law enforcement and health professionals reduce illegal drug diversion and abuse and improve pharmaceutical therapy.

## **CHAMPION FOR THE PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN**

Curran has worked for virtually his entire half century in public life as one of Maryland's most ardent advocates for battered women and at-risk children.

**Domestic Violence:** From his early support of divorce reform, civil protective orders and other laws helping abused women, to his creation and stewardship of the Family Violence Council over ten years ago, Curran has been an outspoken and consistent advocate for better laws, innovative programs, and comprehensive training to help victims of domestic violence. Examples include legislation strengthening the scope and enforcement of civil protective and *ex parte* orders, the development of model domestic violence and sexual assault policies for law enforcement, and training for many systems which must respond to family violence, from 911 operators to police, prosecutors, and the judiciary. He has also worked to prevent abusers from obtaining guns and to provide victims 24-hour access to the courts.

**Sexual Abuse:** Curran has advanced both legislative and educational outreach efforts to improve the protection of children and adults from sexual violence. He has pushed for a civil commitment law in Maryland and was the moving force behind the 2004 law making it a crime to solicit a minor by computer or other means. He has called for lifetime parole supervision of sex offenders and better notification to communities, and he has distributed a guide, *Protection from Sex Offenders*, to help parents and schools prevent victimization.

**Teen Tobacco Use:** Curran led Maryland's participation in the landmark \$206 billion national settlement with the tobacco industry, which garnered \$4.4 billion for Maryland and industry concessions on advertising and marketing cigarettes to teens. He also filed suits to stop unlawful Internet cigarette sales and the use of hip-hop themes to target youth, reached agreements with national cigarette retailers to prevent sales to youth, and led a multi-state initiative to encourage the motion picture industry to reduce smoking in youth-rated movies.

**Juvenile Crime:** After issuing his 1996 report, *Maryland v. Crime: Battle Plan for a New Year and a New Century*, in which he called for greater emphasis on crime prevention, Curran conducted crime forums in every Maryland county to hear the assessments and proposed solutions of local law enforcement officials and other leaders. These forums reinforced his belief that prevention is the best long-term strategy for enhancing community safety. Applying this approach to juvenile crime, Curran promoted over many years a variety of juvenile crime prevention programs to help at-risk youth, including a mentoring program within his own office. He also conducted a statewide youth listening tour to make recommendations in his report, *In Their Own Words*, about how adults can improve their response to teens' problems. In addition, recognizing the link between children's exposure to media violence and youth aggression and delinquency in his report, *Tune It Out!*, Curran distributed 600,000 media violence diaries through the schools to help parents monitor their children's consumption of media violence. Curran also formed a public-private partnership with Sherwin-Williams to promote the clean-up of graffiti to help neighborhoods at risk of decline.

## **ADVOCATE FOR SENIORS**

Curran has focused for many years on the problems of elderly citizens, working especially to help them cope with health-related and end-of-life issues, as well as their vulnerability to fraud and abuse.

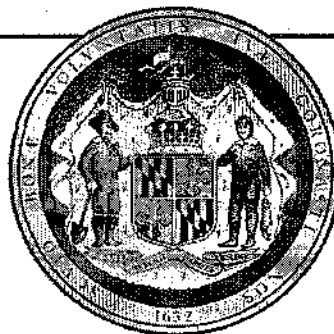
**Advanced Directives/Living Wills:** Curran has been a national leader in empowering people to take control of difficult decisions they may face at the end of their lives, from his groundbreaking opinion early in his tenure that a competent, terminally-ill patient can refuse life-sustaining treatment to his broad educational outreach and dissemination of advanced directives. In 2005, he expanded that outreach by making living wills available in Spanish. He has issued the nation's first comprehensive guide to the role and responsibilities of a health care proxy, as well as a report on policy issues related to Alzheimer's disease. He has also successfully promoted legislation creating a state advisory council on end-of-life care and additional protections for Marylanders who become subjects in medical research.

**Telemarketing and Financial Fraud:** To help protect against the mail and telemarketing schemes which bilk consumers out of billions every year, Curran launched *Senior Sting*, a program in which 500 senior volunteers collected their mail and monitored their phone calls to identify potential fraud. He used this information as the basis for an enforcement and consumer awareness campaign, and also testified before Congress in support of telemarketing fraud legislation. He also created the *Stop Adult Financial Exploitation* ("SAFE") project, in which he initiated a change in the law and conducted trainings for financial institutions to help prevent the financial exploitation of vulnerable adults.

### **PROTECTOR OF THE ENVIRONMENT**

Curran has long championed the clean-up of the Chesapeake Bay and promoted cleaner air and water for Marylanders through vigorous enforcement of state and federal laws. He put environmental polluters in jail for the first time in Maryland history. His enforcement actions have resulted in millions of dollars in damages for oil spills and billions of dollars worth of improvements to the sewer systems of various municipalities. He joined other Attorneys General in suits against coal-fired power plants in other states which contribute to Maryland's high ozone levels and nutrient pollution in the Chesapeake Bay, seeking enforcement of the Clean Air Act requiring installation of better pollution controls. He collaborated with the federal government in a similar suit to reduce nitrogen oxide emissions at three power plants in Maryland and one in Virginia. He also joined in the successful fight against the federal government's efforts to weaken Clean Air Act regulations. His educational and enforcement efforts in lead paint poisoning have resulted in a 39% increase in properties in compliance with the lead risk reduction standard, over \$1 million in penalties, and a significant decrease in the number of young children with elevated blood lead levels.

Maryland Attorney General's Office  
200 St. Paul St  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202



J. Joeseeph Curran, Jr.  
Maryland Attorney General

## **CURRAN'S REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS FROM THE PAST 10 YEARS** (does not include Consumer Protection publications)

- The House Never Loses and Maryland Cannot Win : Why Casino Gambling Is A Bad Idea (1995)
- Stop the Violence: A Call To Action (1996)
- Maryland v. Crime: Battle Plan for a New Year and a New Century (1996)
- Tune It Out! Media Violence, Children and Crime (1997)
- "Dear Attorney General:" Letter from the Kids' Campaign Against Media Violence (1998)
- Spotlight On Prevention: A Resource Guide to Successful Juvenile Crime Prevention Programs Across Maryland (1998)
- A Farewell to Arms: The Solution to Gun Violence in America (1999)
- Stopping Family Violence: The Community Responds (2001)
- In Their Own Words: How Maryland teens perceive their lives and what they think would help alleviate the problems that trouble them most. (2002)
- Guide to Legal Aspects of Doing Business in Maryland (2003)
- Policy Study on Alzheimer's Disease Care (2004)
- Prescription for Disaster: The Growing Problem of Prescription Drug Abuse in Maryland (2005)
- Protection from Sex Offenders (2005)
- The New Federal Drug Benefit: Medicare Part D (2005)
- Nursing Homes: What You Need to Know (1998)
- Report on the Attorney General's Identity Theft Forum (2006)
- Making Medical Decisions for Someone Else: A Guide for Marylanders (2006)