

## Greater Baltimore Committee Long-Term Strategic Priorities



- **Creating and advocating for a competitive business environment** to attract new businesses and expand existing businesses, thereby creating jobs and opportunities.
- **Developing and promoting a comprehensive and efficient regional transportation system** capable of moving goods, services and the workforce.
- **Building and nurturing a highly-trained and educated workforce** to meet the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century knowledge-based economy.
- **Providing programs and services to GBC members** that enhance their community involvement, open doors for new business opportunities and highlight the company's assets to the greater Baltimore community.

To view GBC publications, including *Gaining a Competitive Edge: Keys to Economic Growth and Job Creation in Maryland* and the *2011 State of the Region Report*, and to learn more about GBC initiatives, please visit [www.gbc.org](http://www.gbc.org).



### GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE

*Regional business leaders creating a better tomorrow...today.*

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## GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE



### 2012 Legislative Agenda

**During the 2012 General Assembly session, state lawmakers face the familiar challenge of having to close another projected \$1 billion deficit.**

However, with a sluggish economic recovery forecast and uncertainty over the potential impact on Maryland's economy of federal budget tightening, lawmakers must make job creation and economic growth their overriding top priority.

Maryland's long-term future will be shaped by how lawmakers act, or defer action, on issues relating to economic development and job creation, including an anticipated job-creation proposal by Governor Martin O'Malley.

As part of his pledge to focus on jobs, the governor has indicated that business regulation will be a signature issue during the 2012 session. A review of regulations administered by state agencies – which has been underway since October – could generate additional legislative proposals to enable the state to shed overly burdensome regulations and other barriers to business growth.

The need for regulatory policies that are "streamlined, stable and predictable" is one of eight core pillars for a competitive state business environment contained in a report, *Gaining a Competitive Edge*, published by the Greater Baltimore Committee.

Other core pillars for competitiveness are: government that partners with business, a highly-educated workforce, a fair and competitive tax structure, competitive costs of doing business, superior and reliably-funded transportation

infrastructure, strategic state investments in business growth, and a coordinated, long-term, and well-funded state business marketing strategy.

The GBC urges lawmakers to use these core pillars as a guide for making public policy decisions in Annapolis that will promote job creation and economic growth.

This year especially, our elected leaders must not allow themselves to settle for clever approaches to simply get through another year of fiscal challenges. They must enact policies that, above all, fundamentally nurture private-sector job creation and economic growth in our state.

If we've learned anything in the past several years about the changing landscape when it comes to economic competitiveness, it's that we can no longer just sit back and wait for the recovery to happen.

Even in Maryland, where the federal presence has provided a long-term cushion of stability, we must recognize and act upon the reality that our state's economic paradigm may shift.

Only an engaged, diverse and productive private sector can pull Maryland into an era of growth we are clearly capable of achieving. It's up to our elected leaders, through smart policy decisions, to put entrepreneurs, investors, business owners and managers, and their employees in a position to succeed, grow and thrive.

When that happens, the state's fiscal challenges will recede as our economy and our quality of life improve.

## Protecting a Viable Business Climate

- The Greater Baltimore Committee opposes any proposals to increase or restructure corporate taxes.
- Tax credits have proven to be a sound investment tool to spur economic growth and create jobs. The GBC supports retaining business tax credits.
- The GBC urges the Governor and General Assembly to assess the existing levels appropriated for business tax credits and to increase funding to remain competitive with surrounding jurisdictions.



## Transportation

The GBC is committed to the sustainability and development of Maryland's transportation infrastructure. In the past, the GBC created the Transportation Financing and Governance Task Force to study the manner in which transportation is funded and managed in Maryland. More recently, the GBC has partnered to form the Statewide Transportation Alliance to Restore the Trust (START). This group is comprised of

approximately 90 private sector businesses and entities throughout the state. The goal of this group, to be pursued in the coming session, is to enact policies that increase TTF revenues in excess of \$500 million, and establish a firewall or legally enforceable policy to protect the transportation trust fund from being raided for non-transportation related purposes. In the upcoming session, the GBC will continue its campaign to enhance our state's transportation infrastructure. Specifically, the GBC supports:

- Increasing the gas tax, the staple of the Transportation Trust Fund, and other revenue sources sufficient to adequately address the state's mobility challenges.
- Passing legislation to restore the public's trust in the Transportation Trust Fund.
- Better leveraging and utilizing of public-private partnerships as a tool to deliver public infrastructure

projects by, among other things, limiting the review time by the legislature for various P3 plans.

- Fast tracking MDOT approval and construction of transportation infrastructure projects to meet the demands of BRAC and commuter routes between Baltimore and Washington, D.C.
- The GBC urges the Executive Branch to work closely with our Congressional representatives to support federal transportation reauthorization.

## Education

In order for Maryland companies to succeed at the highest levels, we need a workforce that meets the needs of our knowledge-based economy. Investing in higher education helps to ensure Maryland continues to produce an enviable workforce that is both highly qualified and well-trained.

- The GBC continues its support of investing in higher education, including funding of community colleges to enhance access to higher education opportunities for all income levels and to provide an avenue for customized job training skills.
- The GBC supports education policies that ensure primary and secondary schools are providing science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education, particularly in STEM shortage areas.
- The GBC fully supports the continued growth and expansion of quality charter schools that are setting a new bar for innovative teaching techniques in Maryland. This can only be achieved by serious charter school reform to grant broader autonomy and commit appropriate funding to charter schools.
- A strong trend in positive test results indicates a well-structured partnership between the State of Maryland, the City of Baltimore and the Baltimore City Public Schools. The GBC supports the education reform efforts and opposes any changes that would threaten the continued progress of the Baltimore City Public Schools.



## Core Pillars for a Competitive Business Environment

- **Government leadership that unites with business as a partner.**
- **Workforce that is highly-educated and meets Maryland's business needs.**
- **Regulatory policies that are streamlined, stable and predictable.**
- **Tax structure that is fair and competitive.**
- **Competitive costs of doing business.**
- **Superior transportation infrastructure with reliable funding mechanisms.**
- **Strategic and effective state investments in business growth.**
- **Business marketing strategy that is aggressive, coordinated, long-term and well-funded.**

*These eight core pillars were compiled by the Greater Baltimore Committee from focus groups of business leaders and economic development experts in Maryland. To view the entire report, please visit the publications section of [www.gbc.org](http://www.gbc.org).*

## Bioscience

• The GBC strongly supports increasing the tax credits for investments in biotechnology and urges the General Assembly to devote the necessary funds in order to fully maximize the State's return and capitalize on this mounting industry.



- The GBC supports the continued State investment at university-related bioscience facilities.
- The GBC supports altering the makeup of the Maryland Life Sciences Advisory Board to include large- and small-life science companies, nonprofits and members of academia.

## Growing the Economic Base

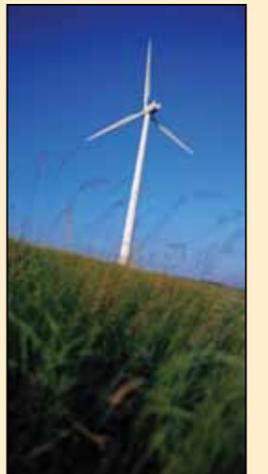
- Recognizing that our regional economy is more dynamic and robust by the inclusion of minority/women-owned businesses, the GBC continues its support of inclusionary strategies that advance productivity, innovation and help fuel our region's economic growth.
- The Greater Baltimore Committee urges increased funding of the Department of Business and Economic Development in order to ensure financing and necessary resources are available to Maryland businesses and those seeking to expand in Maryland. The GBC fully supports the funding of DBED programs such as the Maryland Small Business Development Financing Authority and the Venture Fund.

## Health Care

- The GBC supports efforts to increase employee wellness programs that focus on chronic disease prevention and promote good health in the workplace.
- The GBC opposes measures to restrict scientific research and stifle job creation in the healthcare industry.

## Energy

Alternatives to "coal-fired" energy generation are the future. The General Assembly needs to enact legislation to enable alternative sources of energy (i.e. wind, solar, nuclear and other renewable energy sources) to be generated and distributed in an expedited and cost-efficient fashion.



- The GBC supports a more stable and predictable regulatory policy that balances legitimate environmental concerns but allows projects to move forward in a competitive and open manner.
- While considering our growing electricity and energy challenges, the Greater Baltimore Committee urges the General Assembly to resist re-regulation.