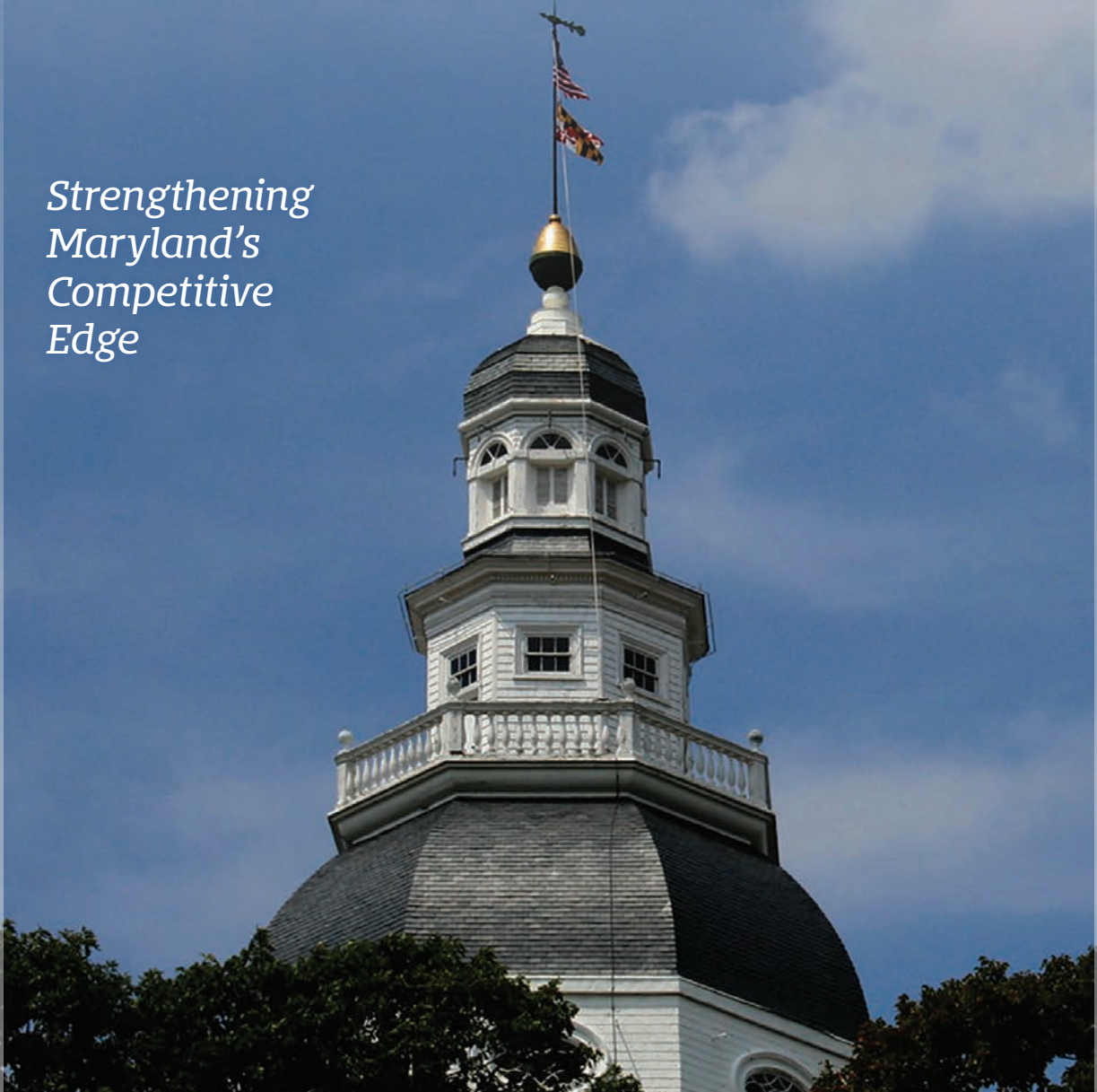




GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE 2016 Legislative Priorities

*Strengthening
Maryland's
Competitive
Edge*



POSITIONING MARYLAND TO COMPETE IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

During the past several years the Greater Baltimore Committee has intensely focused on making the Greater Baltimore region and the entire state of Maryland as competitive as possible so that businesses and the private sector can grow, innovate and thrive.

Making Maryland more competitive will help expand and improve the state's tax base. This is imperative to ensure Maryland can offer a high-quality educational system, a modern transportation network, public sector services for our citizens, and an attractive quality of life. As a result, Maryland can compete to retain and attract businesses, spur innovation, and support the many world-class health care, academic and other vital institutions based in the state.

One doesn't need to read or watch the news to know that economic growth is no longer about competing with our neighboring states. The digital revolution and rapid improvements in shipping and worldwide transportation have created competition on a global scale.

Each year the GBC works hard to craft and champion a set of legislative priorities that will position Maryland to better compete when it comes to attracting, retaining, and growing businesses and the economy.

As an independent, private sector thought leader and problem-solving organization that partners with elected officials, top business CEOs, and nonprofit leaders, the GBC has the experience, expertise, and relationships to advocate for legislative policies that can add a competitive edge for Maryland.

The GBC Priorities for 2016 include: Incentivizing education models to ensure Maryland youths graduate with the knowledge and skills to meet the demands of tomorrow's job opportunities; incentives to support entrepreneurs and business innovation; increasing support for minority and women-owned business operations; and establishing a fair and predictable tax structure.

Maryland is a great state and has many assets that make it a vital economic jewel. In the 2016 General Assembly Session legislators need to adopt legislation, policies and incentives to protect, promote and grow these assets so the state, its citizens and businesses can secure their place in the global economy.

The Greater Baltimore Committee looks forward to advancing these priorities and other areas of interest to the business community. By working together to leverage our assets and enhance opportunities for businesses to flourish and jobs to be created, I'm confident that Maryland will be recognized as a leader in the global economy.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Don Fry".

Donald C. Fry
GBC President & CEO

Building and Strengthening Tomorrow's Workforce

Preparing today's youths to be successful in tomorrow's workplace will require innovative educational models and a stronger focus on industry-specific training programs. Lawmakers should support incentives for a broad range of learning experiences to ensure that the state's workforce is comprised of well-trained workers for jobs at a variety of skill levels.

- *Study the feasibility of creating a year-round training and education program for out-of-school youths ages 16–24.*
- *Create a charter school investment fund to assist newly-approved charter school operators with the necessary capital and operating funds.*
- *Provide incentives to encourage more high schools to follow the "early college" model where students graduate with a diploma or an associate degree.*
- *Examine the possible reinstatement of the highly-utilized Partnership for Workforce Quality or comparable programs aimed at enabling employers to better train workers or modernize facilities.*
- *Ensure Maryland's K–12 STEM curriculum is fully aligned with college standards and career needs.*





Promoting Entrepreneurship and Innovation

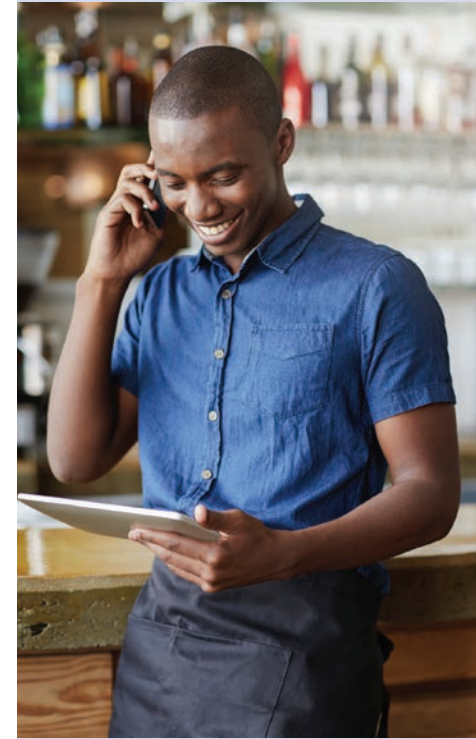
As Maryland competes to be a leader in emerging technologies and grow a strong entrepreneurial community, state support needs to reflect these priorities. In order to compete and succeed in the global, 21st century economy, Maryland's small and startup companies need the state to provide additional incentives to help them raise capital and bring their ideas, services, and products to market.

- ▶ *Pass legislation to create an Angel Investor Tax Credit or pass similar legislation to provide better access to capital for startup companies in a wide variety of industries.*
- ▶ *Provide additional funding for the Maryland Innovation Initiative, as well as other programs designed to increase commercialization of research out of our state's world-renowned research institutions.*
- ▶ *Strategically increase state investments in business incentive programs to make Maryland more competitive with neighboring states.*

Expanding Our Economic Assets

The strength of Maryland's future economy is heavily dependent upon the state's ability to diversify and take advantage of growth opportunities. Legislators should examine how to better expand the reach of Maryland businesses nationally and internationally.

- ▶ *Develop a universal application process for minority and women-owned business certification that would be accepted by the state and all Maryland subdivisions.*
- ▶ *Provide financial and other support for the Greater Baltimore Metro Export Plan, which seeks to grow the region's economy by increasing export opportunities for businesses, particularly small and medium size businesses.*
- ▶ *Encourage the development of innovative public-private partnerships by providing better protections for proprietary information of private sector partners.*





Advocating for Balanced and Effective Transportation Policies

An effective, reliable transportation system that provides meaningful connections from communities to job hubs across the state is essential for workers and employers alike. Maryland's ability to provide an integrated, effective, and efficient transportation network will be heavily compromised if transportation revenues are not readily available. Policy makers should focus on appropriately balancing state and local needs for both well-maintained roads and an effective public transit system.

- ▶ *Develop a 10-year strategy that lays out a balanced, comprehensive plan to invest in all modes of transportation.*
- ▶ *Provide incentives to employers who provide transportation connections for employees from the nearest transit stop to their place of business.*
- ▶ *Examine the feasibility of creating local or regional transportation authorities to complement state initiatives.*
- ▶ *Oppose policies that seek to reduce the available revenues or revenue sources of the Transportation Trust Fund.*

Building a Competitive and Fair Tax System

A fair and predictable tax structure is one of the key factors that affect business location and expansion, yet Maryland's tax structure remains largely uncompetitive in some areas. The state's spending process and tax structure should be reformed to ensure obligations are being met without placing an undue burden on individual or business taxpayers.

- ▶ *Develop long-term strategies to cover the increasing burden of Maryland's debt service and reduce the pressure on the General Fund to cover the cost of debt service.*
- ▶ *Implement single sales factor apportionment for all business and industry sectors.*
- ▶ *Reduce the tax burden paid by pass-through entities to a level comparable to neighboring states.*
- ▶ *Oppose passage of combined reporting, which would negatively affect the corporate tax structure and diminish the economic vitality of our state.*



GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE

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

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