

A Stronger Future for Baltimore City



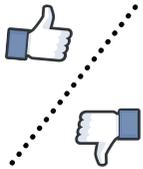
Following last year's unrest in Baltimore City, the General Assembly considered a number of bills aimed at providing additional resources and increased opportunities for city residents. Many of those bills were passed by the General Assembly, including legislation to extend hours of operations at city libraries, funding for demolition, codifying the Baltimore Regional Neighborhood Initiative, and providing grants and loans to anchor institutions for community development.

Building and Strengthening Tomorrow's Workforce



The Greater Baltimore Committee supported a number of bills targeted toward increased investment and opportunity for workforce training and education. One of these bills, House Bill 290, incentivizes employers to hire apprentices in the construction industry by providing grants to cover costs. The GBC also successfully advocated for legislation to create the Next Generation Scholars of Maryland program and a bill that seeks to increase the number of high school students receiving Career & Technical Education or industry certifications before graduating from high school.

Promoting Entrepreneurship and Innovation



This year, the General Assembly failed to pass a number of initiatives designed to support the state's entrepreneurs and high-growth sectors. Legislation to expand the One Maryland Tax Credit to include incubators and businesses that locate in RISE zones did not receive a vote in committee while legislation to increase the Research and Development Tax Credit failed on the final day of session. The General Assembly also did not pass the GBC's signature initiative to create an Angel investor Tax Credit. However, the General Assembly did pass legislation allowing the Maryland Innovation Initiative to provide equity investment financing for commercialization of intellectual property at universities and a bill allowing the state pension system to invest in private equity and venture capital.

Advocating for Balanced and Effective Transportation Policies



In an effort to increase transparency in how the state chooses and funds transportation projects, the General Assembly passed legislation that requires the Maryland Department of Transportation to develop a ranking system by which projects are evaluated that is consistent with goals established in the legislation. The GBC supported this controversial piece of legislation, which was vetoed by the Governor and subsequently overridden by the General Assembly. An effort to repeal the automatic indexing of the state's gas tax to inflation failed. The GBC opposed this legislation on the basis that it would take much-needed revenues out of the Transportation Trust Fund.

Building a Competitive and Fair Tax System



Following the second report of the Maryland Economic Development and Business Climate Commission, a number of bills were introduced in an effort to make Maryland's tax structure more competitive. One of the most significant pieces of legislation that failed to pass the General Assembly would have achieved the goal of reducing the tax burden for taxpayers in a variety of income tax brackets. An effort supported by the GBC to institute single sales factor apportionment was also not successful. However, legislation opposed by the GBC that would have required combined reporting died in committee, which was good news for the business community.