



# GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE

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



January 11, 2017

## State House Update

### FOLLOW THE GBC



### GBC'S 2017 AGENDA

GBC's 2017 Legislative Agenda

### GBC'S LEGISLATIVE TRACKER

To read testimony and get more information about bills the GBC tracked this year, visit our legislative tracking website.

### MD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

General Assembly Website

Committee Schedule

### GBC EVENTS

**January 17, 2017**

Newsmaker Breakfast with Howard County Executive Allan Kittleman

**January 23, 2017**

## Message to Members

During the 90-day legislative session, which runs January 11 through April 10, the Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) will share weekly updates with its members about the most important issues in Annapolis affecting the business community. The *State House Update* is designed to keep GBC's members informed about what is important to your business or organization.

The actions that policymakers take in Annapolis can have a wide-ranging impact on businesses. The impact on businesses can come in a variety of ways - through legislation, budgetary action or new regulations. The GBC has a team on the ground in Annapolis to ensure that the business community's voice is heard and our members are well represented.

Please read the *State House Update* to find out the latest information in Annapolis. In addition, the GBC tracks priority legislation on our website. By [clicking here](#), you can see what action the GBC is taking on specific legislation and subject areas. The site also allows GBC members to weigh in or find out more information about legislation through direct contact with the GBC's policy staff.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Maryland General Assembly  
Legislative Forum

Mary 15, 2017  
Save the Date:  
GBC Annual Meeting

Event and sponsorship  
information:  
Lisa Byrd at 410-727-2820



Donald C. Fry  
President and CEO

## GBC 2017 Legislative Priorities

Every year, the GBC Legislative Priorities serve as the foundation of our efforts in Annapolis and throughout the year. These priorities communicate to policymakers a roadmap for creating jobs and improving the business climate. For 2017, the priorities fall in six categories:

- Building and Strengthening the Workforce
- Promoting Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Advocating Growth-Oriented Transportation Policies
- Building a Competitive, Predictable and Fair Tax System
- Ensuring Public Safety to Protect Business Interests and Employees
- Promoting Tourism as an Economic Development Driver

### STAFF CONTACTS

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Each of these categories has specific actions or recommendations that policymakers are urged to undertake. A look at the full 2017 GBC Legislative Priorities can be found [here](#).

### CORPORATE SPONSOR



## Major Issues for the 2017 Session

The 2017 session of the Maryland General Assembly will undoubtedly be interesting and contentious. A number of important issues for businesses will make news during the 90-day session. Check out [this piece](#) in the Baltimore Business Journal to hear my take on what to watch for in the 2017 session.

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In Annapolis, here are just some of the issues we expect to see:

#### Fiscal Year 2018 budget

Maryland's budget woes continue. For the current fiscal year, lower than forecasted revenue means a budget gap of \$365 million and a roughly \$500 million gap for the FY2018 budget. Maryland's constitution requires a balanced budget so Governor Larry Hogan and legislative leaders will have to address the deficit. For businesses, this likely means no major tax policy changes or the creation of significant economic development programs.

#### Capital debt affordability

The legislature's Capital Debt Affordability Committee, which reviews the size and condition of Maryland's tax-supported debt, recommended that the new debt level remain flat. This suggests little or no new capital projects.

#### Paid sick leave

Last year, the Maryland House of Delegates passed mandated sick leave legislation for businesses with 15 or more employees. The Maryland Senate did not pass the bill.





Recently, Governor Hogan proposed mandatory paid sick leave, but limited the benefit for businesses with 50 or more employees, along with other tweaks. This issue will be among the most contentious of the session.

#### **Fracking moratorium**

Maryland's westernmost counties lie on natural gas deposits, but hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, is a controversial method for extraction. Some lawmakers are pushing for a permanent prohibition of fracking, while others are seeking an extension for the existing moratorium.

#### **Independent redistricting commission**

Governor Hogan is pushing for the creation of an independent commission to examine to draw Maryland's Congressional and state legislative districts. Some of Maryland's Congressional districts are among the most gerrymandered in the country.

#### **Repeal of transportation scoring system**

The governor has stated his top priority is to repeal a 2016 bill that mandates transportation projects be scored based on a set of guiding principles or goals. The governor vetoed legislation and the legislature overrode the veto late in the 2016 session.

#### **Baltimore City Community College performance assessment**

A report by the Schaefer Center for Public Policy at the University of Baltimore concluded that Baltimore City Community College is not meeting the needs of Baltimore residents and recommended the institution should become part of the University System of Maryland. Some legislative leaders have made addressing these issues a top priority.

#### **Baltimore Mayor Catherine Pugh's Agenda**

As a former state Delegate and Senator, Baltimore Mayor Catherine Pugh is expected to have a robust agenda in Annapolis. Mayor Pugh understands how things work in the halls of Annapolis.

## **Maryland General Assembly Changes for 2017**

In 2017, we will see a roster of new faces in the Maryland General Assembly and the Executive Branch.

In the Senate, the election of Baltimore Mayor Catherine Pugh (D) created a vacancy that has been filled by Delegate Barbara Robinson (D-40). Senator Delores Kelley (D-10) has moved from the Senate Finance Committee to take over as vice-chair of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee while Senator Jim Rosapepe (D-21) has moved to the Senate Finance Committee.

In addition, newly elected Congressman Jamie Raskin's (D) former Senate seat has been filled by Delegate William Smith (D-20). Delegate Smith's vacancy remains unfilled. Other notable changes in the Senate include Senator Douglas J.J. Peters' (D-23) ascension to Majority Leader and Senator Bill Ferguson (D-46) as the new Chair of the Executive Nominations Committee.

In the House, two Baltimore City legislators have joined the Pugh Administration. They are Delegate Jill Carter (D-41) and Delegate Peter Hammen (D-46). Delegate Hammen's seat will be filled by Robbyn Lewis (D-40) while Delegate Carter's seat has not yet been filled. Delegate Hammen's departure also vacated the chairmanship of the House Health and Government Operations Committee, which will be filled by Delegate Shane Pendergrass (D-13) with Delegate Eric Bromwell (D-8) moving up to vice-chair. More House leadership changes will be announced this week and vacancies will be filled shortly.

Earlier in 2016, former House minority leader Anthony O'Donnell (R-8) resigned after an appointment to the Maryland Public Service Commission. He has been replaced by Jerry Clark (R). Delegate John Cluster (R-8) left his seat to join the Maryland Parole Commission and was replaced by his son, Joe Cluster (R).

In the Executive Branch, some of Governor Hogan's top staff and cabinet secretaries have changed. The governor appointed Maryland Department of Human Resources Secretary Sam Malhotra Chief of Staff, taking over for Craig Williams, who left to join John Hopkins University. In addition, Chris Shank has been named Chief Legislative Officer replacing Joe Getty, whom Governor Hogan named to the Maryland Court of Appeals. With the departure of Van Mitchell, Dennis Schrader has been appointed the new Secretary of the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

## Upcoming Dates of Interest

The GBC has two great events this month for those interested in learning more about the most pressing policy issues facing the Greater Baltimore region.

On **January 17**, join us at the GBC's first Newsmaker breakfast of the year featuring Howard County Executive Allan Kittleman at the GBC beginning at 7:30 a.m. County Executive Kittleman will discuss Ellicott City's response and recovery from the flood in 2016 and economic development in Howard County. [Register to attend](#).

On **January 23**, join us for the GBC's annual Maryland General Assembly Legislative Forum at the Baltimore Marriott Inner Harbor at Camden Yards starting at 8 a.m. The event will provide a preview of the Maryland General Assembly's 2017 legislative session featuring Senator Richard Madaleno, Senator J. B. Jennings, Delegate Nicholas Kipke and Keiffer J. Mitchell, Jr., Senior Advisor, Office of the Governor. [Register to attend](#).