



# GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE

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



January 10, 2018

## State House Update

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### GBC'S 2018 AGENDA

GBC's 2018 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

## Message to Members

The 2018 legislative session of the Maryland General Assembly should prove to be another busy year. The session will not lack excitement, even with this being an election year. To keep track of the Greater Baltimore Committee's (GBC) efforts in Annapolis, please visit and bookmark our legislative webpage, which can be found [here](#).

Within the GBC's legislative webpage, members have access to our 2018 legislative agenda and important information about the Maryland General Assembly. Additionally, the webpage tracks the GBC's positions on legislation and includes access to our written testimony. Please visit to stay informed and help us advocate on issues important to the regional business community.

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

Sincerely,

**January 29, 2018**  
2018 Maryland General  
Assembly Legislative Forum

**May 14, 2018**  
Annual Meeting

**July 17, 2018**  
Golf Classic

**SAVE THE DATE:**  
**October 11, 2018**  
Transportation Summit

**SAVE THE DATE:**  
**December 5, 2018**  
Mayor's Business Recognition  
Awards Luncheon

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

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Donald C. Fry  
President and CEO

## GBC Legislative Priorities for the 2018 Session

Every year, prior to the start of the legislative session of the Maryland General Assembly, the GBC releases its core policy priorities. Here is a primer on the 2018 GBC Legislative Priorities:

Core policy priorities areas:

- Creating a More Competitive Business Climate
- Building and Strengthening the Workforce
- Promoting Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Ensuring Public Safety to Grow Jobs and Promote a Higher Quality of Life
- Building a Competitive, Predictable and Fair Tax System
- Advocating Growth-Oriented Transportation Policies
- Promoting Tourism as an Economic Development Driver

GBC's areas of focus for the 2018 session include:

- Ensuring the business tax climate remains fair, stable and predictable.
- Reducing homicides and violent crime in Baltimore City, employing a two-pronged approach that applies crime control strategies while simultaneously working to promote programs for Baltimore's citizens, especially youth, which can prevent crime.
- Promoting innovation and entrepreneurship through increased support for targeted incentives, workforce initiatives and a strong higher education system.
- Supporting policies that ensure the state's workforce is comprised of well-trained workers at all skill levels that meet the demands of today's employers.
- Providing for responsible and results-oriented school financing formulas and accountability measures.
- Advancing initiatives that increase transparency and promote good governance.

For additional details, take a look at the 2018 GBC Legislative Priorities [here](#).

## Public Safety a Major Focus for the 2018 Session

A major focus for the GBC this session will be supporting and promoting solutions to help Baltimore City address historic increases in crime, especially homicides. Violent crime and homicides threaten the hope and vision for a city with a strong residential base, growing middle-class, and businesses that are growing and creating jobs. It is critical that leaders join together in pursuit of a two-pronged approach that reduces

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violent crime while simultaneously addressing the root causes of crime.

The GBC - and the entire business community - believes improving public safety in Baltimore is this session's number one priority. While the GBC has been an active partner with the mayor and police commissioner to help solve the issues plaguing the city, it's important to note that the Baltimore Police Department and mayor can't solve the public safety issue on their own. They need state help and action. It's going to take all parties, including the ideas and involvement of business leaders to bring about a substantial reduction of crime. Violence reduction and public safety will dominate much of the legislative activity this year, and the GBC will be very much involved in the discussions.

## Important Issues for the 2018 Session

The GBC has its eye on a number of likely hot issues for this year's session. These include:

**Paid Sick Leave:** The first major policy battle of the legislative session will be the Governor's veto of paid sick leave legislation. Both sides are actively working the issue; expect the key battleground to be in the Senate.

**Budget:** Between weak sales tax revenues and the potential impacts of federal changes to the tax code and health care, this year's budget may be more challenging than expected. The GBC desires a responsible, thoughtful budget and tax structure that recognizes our changing economy and ensures that Maryland has stable revenue sources to finance the state's priorities: education, public safety and economic growth.

**Health Care:** The GBC will urge the General Assembly to act quickly to address any federal changes in order to mitigate any impact on the Maryland health care system. Without a federal mandate requiring citizens to obtain health insurance, the General Assembly will need to move quickly to understand the consequences to Maryland's health care system and insurance premiums.

**Education:** While the Kirwan Commission has delayed its final report with recommendations for school funding and statewide education improvements, the GBC is confident that the legislature will take the time this session to address fiscal problems in jurisdictions that haven't received adequate State funding.

**Business Tax Credits:** Legislative analysts have recommended several business tax credits for repeal or overhaul. While the GBC supports a thoughtful review of tax credits, two credits in particular promote economic growth and should not be eliminated. The benefits of these programs far outweigh the costs, as they leverage small amounts of taxpayer dollars to increase opportunities for economic growth and activity.

**Public Safety:** Violent crime reduction and public safety proposals are likely to dominate legislative action this year and the GBC is hopeful the General Assembly will act quickly and decisively to provide the resources and policy changes

needed to ensure the safety of residents of and visitors to the Baltimore region. Proposals being floated include: making a second firearm conviction a felony; requiring second-time violent offenders serve their full sentences and be denied parole; and strengthening Maryland's anti-gang and Racketeer Influence and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO) statutes by expanding the list of gang-related crimes that can be prosecuted across jurisdictional lines.

## Upcoming Dates of Interest

On [January 29](#), attend the annual GBC Maryland General Assembly Legislative Forum, which will feature top legislative leaders from both parties and the Governor's Office who will discuss the legislative dynamics that are likely to play out in the 90-day session. The event, which will feature a panel of leading policymakers, including Senator J.B. Jennings, Delegate Maggie McIntosh and Delegate Kathy Szeliga, will begin at 7:30 a.m. at the Renaissance Baltimore Harborplace Hotel, 202 East Pratt Street, Baltimore, MD 21202.