



GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE

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April 1, 2019

State House Update

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GBC'S 2019 AGENDA

[GBC's 2019 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](#)

Message to Members

Any bills passed by the legislature more than a week prior to Sine Die, which falls on April 8 this year, must be acted upon by the Governor prior to the close of session. This provides the Maryland General Assembly the opportunity for a veto override in the same session that the bill passed. Otherwise, the legislature would have to attempt a veto override after the current session, either during a special session or at the start of the 2020 session.

For the 2019 session, the passage of following three controversial bills brought out the veto pen of Governor Larry Hogan, but all three vetoes were overridden by the Maryland General Assembly:

- SB 280/HB 166 -- *Labor and Employment - Payment of Wages - Minimum Wage (Fight for Fifteen)*

This bill increases the statewide minimum wage to \$15 per hour to be phased in by January 1, 2025. Small employers with 14 or fewer employees have until July 1, 2026 to implement a \$15 per hour minimum wage.

GBC EVENTS

April 9, 2019
Newsmaker Breakfast with
Baltimore City Councilman Eric
Costello

April 15, 2019
Breakfast Briefing:
What the Affordable Care Act
Means for You

May 13, 2019
GBC Annual Meeting

June 3, 2019
Newsmaker Breakfast with
Baltimore Mayor Catherine
Pugh

July 10, 2019
GBC Golf Classic

Speaker Series with
Chris McDonell,
President and CEO,
McDonell Consulting
Group/Sandler Training:

May 8, 2019
LinkedIn and the Art of Social
Selling

September 26, 2019
Closing the Sale: How to Inspect
What you Expect

November 20, 2019
Effective Networking and
Business Development

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

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- SB 703/HB 1052 -- *Alcohol, Tobacco, and Motor Fuel Commission*

This bill moves Maryland's alcohol, tobacco and fuel laws from the Comptroller's office to a newly created Alcohol, Tobacco and Motor Fuel Commission.

- SB 128 -- *Community Control of School Calendars Act*

This bill gives local boards of education the power to set the date for the start of the school year. The Governor, through an Executive Order, had forced schools to begin the school year after Labor Day.

The veto override votes for all three bills were primarily along party lines. To override a veto, a three-fifths majority is required, meaning a minimum of 29 votes in the Senate and 85 votes in the House of Delegates. With a partisan split in the Senate of 32 Democrats and 15 Republicans and 99 Democrats and 42 Republicans in the House, Democrats have a comfortable cushion to override vetoes if the voting does not stray too far from party lines.

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

Sincerely,



Donald C. Fry
President and CEO

Status of Democratic and Republican Party Priorities

Earlier in the 2019 session, House Republicans and the Democratic leadership released their respective legislative priorities. As expected, the Democratic leadership's stated legislative priorities have fared far better than those of the Republicans.

The Maryland House Republicans four legislative priorities:

- *Unlikely to pass* - SB 951/HB 854 -- *Income Tax Rates - Reductions*, which lowers the Maryland income tax rate by a quarter percentage point, which would amount to about \$400 million annually.
- *Unlikely to pass* - HB 1023 -- *Criminal Procedure - Maryland Violent Offender Registry*, which establishes a public registry of violent offenders modeled after Maryland's sex offender registry.
- *Unlikely to pass* - HB 670 -- *Public Safety - Special Police Officers - Employing Entity*, which allows government bodies to establish a special police officer program within their jurisdictions to respond to school shootings.
- *Defeated* - HB 724 -- *Legislative Districts - Single-Member Delegate Districts (One Person One Vote Act of 2019)*, which authorizes single-member House



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legislative districts rather than the current structure that requires the 47 legislative districts to have three delegates.

The Democratic legislative leadership's seven legislative priorities:

- *Passed* - SB 280/HB 166 -- *Labor and Employment - Payment of Wages - Minimum Wage (Fight for Fifteen)*, which raises Maryland's minimum wage to \$15 per hour.
- *Passed* - SB 181/HB 248 -- *Education - Child Care Subsidies - Mandatory Funding Level*, which expands the child care tax credit.
- *Likely to pass* - SB 759/HB 768 -- *Health - Prescription Drug Affordability Board*, which creates a prescription drug price monitoring board and cap prescription costs for state retirees.
- *Likely to pass* - SB 802/HB 814 - *Maryland Health Insurance Option (Protect Maryland Health Care Act of 2019)*, which prohibits health insurers from declining insurance to those with pre-existing conditions.
- *Likely to pass* - SB 882/HB 740 -- *Criminal Law - Firearms - Computer-Aided Fabrication and Serial Number (3-D Printed Firearms and Ghost Guns)*, which bans 3-D printed guns.
- *Likely to pass* - SB 285/HB 109 -- *Environment - Expanded Polystyrene Food Service Products - Prohibition*, which bans polystyrene in Maryland.
- *Likely to pass* - SB 895/HB 1169 -- *Business Regulation - Tobacco Products and Electronic Smoking Devices - Revisions*, which raises the minimum age for buying tobacco to 21.

Based on these legislative outcomes it is clear that the Democratic Party, which holds large majorities in the Senate and House, is in solid control of the legislative branch despite two consecutive losses for the State's highest elective office. However, the Governor of Maryland arguably remains the most powerful executive in the nation thanks to Maryland's unique system of budgeting power.

Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Passes

Maryland's Fiscal Year 2020 General Fund budget passed the Senate unanimously and the House by a vote of 123-12. The \$46.6 billion budget is balanced as required by the Maryland Constitution. Notably, the budget provides \$255 million to begin implementing initial recommendations of the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education, better known as the Kirwan Commission. The budget contains no new taxes, but there remains pending legislation that would apply sales tax to out-of-state online vendors that sell third-party products. To complement the \$1.1 billion Rainy Day Fund, budget leaders set aside an additional \$117 million in reserve as fears of an economic downturn percolate. With the recently announced "write down" in revenue for the current and upcoming fiscal years, coupled with potentially significant increases in school spending stemming from implementation of Kirwan Commission recommendations, next year's budget negotiations could be increasingly difficult and contentious.

Upcoming Dates of Interest

On [April 9](#), the GBC is hosting a Newsmaker Breakfast with Baltimore City Councilman Eric Costello. This event will begin at 7:30 a.m. at the GBC Office, 111 South Calvert Street, Suite 1700, Baltimore, MD 21202.

On [April 15](#), the GBC is hosting a Breakfast Briefing "What the Affordable Care Act Means for You." This event will begin at 7:30 a.m. at the GBC Office, 111 South Calvert Street, Suite 1700, Baltimore, MD 21202.

Join the GBC on [May 13](#) for its 64th Annual Meeting, the state's premier business event of the year. To become a sponsor or to purchase tickets, please contact [Lisa Byrd](#), Director of Events and Business Development, at 410-727-2820.