



The Maryland Chamber of Commerce represents the unified voice of the Maryland business community. It is the advocacy arm for businesses in the development and promotion of strong public policy that ensures future economic growth for Maryland businesses, employees and families.

THE MARYLAND CHAMBER SUPPORTS:

- a robust free enterprise system with limited intrusion by government
- balanced and predictable laws and regulations that promote economic development and do not impose unreasonable costs on businesses or their customers
- preservation of the employer's right to manage its workforce
- consistency in labor and employment language between federal, state and local statutes

The 2019 legislative session is an opportunity to defend the progress we have made and advance the jobs agenda. We intend to carefully monitor the anticipated critical issues below throughout the 2019 session. Together, we work to make an impact in Annapolis and build a stronger future for Maryland.

BUSINESS REGULATION & OPERATIONS

We work to ensure polices are created that benefit the employer-employee relationship and allow businesses to be competitive with their workforce. We address regulatory issues affecting daily operational activities and support legislation that allows market force principles to work in the state's economy.

Anticipated critical issues:

- Economic Impact Analyses on Regulations Impacting Small Businesses: provides economic analyses on proposed and drafted regulations promulgated by state agencies
- Prohibitions on Consumer Contract Renewal Terms: places unnecessary restrictions on contract renewal provisions and imposes unreasonable financial and criminal penalties on a merchant

CIVIL LIABILITY

We believe the civil law system should not punish lawful commerce. We address issues related to tort reform and civil liability, including opposing efforts to expand exposure to liability and damages that weaken businesses' defenses.

Anticipated critical issues:

- Punitive Damages: changes to Maryland's current definition for punitive damages could increase the cost of doing business in the state
- Non-economic Damages: increases businesses' liability exposure and corresponding liability insurance premium



CYBER & TECHNOLOGY

We believe the fields of cyber and technology are important and growing sectors of Maryland's economy. We support the development of policies that encourage and facilitate growth, entrepreneurship and innovation within these sectors.

Anticipated critical issues:

- **5G/Small Cell:** allows for the efficient installation and expansion of fifth generation wireless broadband technology across the state
- **Net Neutrality:** reinstates rolled-back federal regulations on the internet creating challenges and inconsistencies for businesses that work across state lines
- **Cybersecurity and Biotechnology Investment Tax Credits:** advances existing credit programs and increases incentives for research and development
- **Data Privacy:** attempts to regulate customer data privacy, causing inconsistencies for businesses that operate in multiple states

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

We ensure that Maryland fosters an educational and vocational ecosystem focused on developing, retaining, and attracting a more globally competitive workforce. We believe in strategies that seamlessly link education and workforce development and embed skills-based learning into academic instruction.

Anticipated critical issues:

- **Apprenticeship and Intern Tax Credits:** expands the pool of apprenticeship and career technical education opportunities for the next generation of workers
- **Second Chance Employment:** helps to protect second chance employers from liability, improving the opportunities for ex-offenders to reintegrate into society

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

We support community and business endeavors that sustain, enhance, protect and conserve Maryland's natural resources for present and future generations. At the same time, we work to maintain the balance between economic need and environmental concern.

Anticipated critical issues:

- **Renewable Portfolio Standard Increase:** doubles the mandatory minimum amounts of expensive renewable energy sources used in the state, resulting in higher energy costs for businesses
- **Carbon Tax:** creates a tax on Maryland businesses for the use of gasoline, natural gas and other greenhouse gases, substantially increasing the costs to Marylanders—while having no impact on emissions originating in other states



HEALTH CARE & BIOPHARMA

We believe in meaningful health care reform that allows employers to best meet the needs of their employees. We oppose mandated health benefit demands, as well as regulatory oversight and requirements. We also address issues in legislative interaction in the pharmacological discovery and development processes.

Anticipated critical issues:

- **Price Gouging:** reinstates law forcing manufacturers, or wholesale distributors of a drug, to provide volumes of paperwork to a state agency with no guarantee of protection from public disclosure of proprietary and confidential information, and no guarantee that it will reduce pharmaceutical costs
- **Pharmaceutical Pricing and Availability:** addresses concerns with cost and availability of prescription drugs; we strive to strike the balance between patient affordability and restrictions on manufacturers

LABOR & EMPLOYMENT

We seek to maintain a balance in the relationship between employees and employers within the state. We work to ensure policies are created that promote fairness, reduce excessive mandates and protect employer interests.

Anticipated critical issues:

- **Mandatory Paid Leave:** we seek to address concerns about the expansion of onerous requirements and unreasonable sanctions for the statewide paid leave mandate
- **\$15 Minimum Wage:** alters the price of labor, thus threatening jobs, the price of goods and overall state competitiveness
- **Restrictive Scheduling:** enacts unreasonably restrictive employee shift scheduling requirements

TAXATION

We support tax policy reform that reduces the cost of doing business. It is our goal to strengthen the state's competitive tax climate to help attract and retain businesses, talent and investment.

Anticipated critical issues:

- **Tax Relief for Pass-through Businesses:** positively reforms how Maryland small businesses are treated under the state's personal income tax regime
- **Corporate Income Tax Rate Reduction:** reduces the corporate income tax rate from 8.25 percent to seven percent, supporting the state's economic competitiveness
- **Corporations and Business Entities – Filing Fees and Combined Reporting:** effects corporate income tax reporting for retail sales and food services corporations, creating disadvantages for small businesses in the state



TRANSPORTATION

We believe improved state transportation networks boost economic opportunity. We work to advance short- and long-term answers to statewide transportation and transit needs. We support sustainably funded solutions that safely and reliably transport people and goods.

Anticipated critical issues:

- Infrastructure funding: ensures that the state's investment in critical infrastructure projects continue to be a priority in order to improve the safe and efficient movement of people and goods

Want to be a part of the process? Join one of our subject-matter policy committees and make your voice heard. Contact us at 410-269-0642 and let's work together for a stronger state.