



HOWARD COUNTY
CHAMBER

GENERAL ASSEMBLY HANDBOOK

2024



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DEAR ADVOCATES,

Thank you for supporting the Howard County Chamber of Commerce. We are grateful for your membership and your support, which helps us and our partners as we work to make Howard County the best place to live, work, and grow.

My team at the Howard County Chamber is hard at work to serve as the leading voice for business in the county, through any and all challenges. You can be confident that we are leading efforts to encourage job creation and workforce development, strengthen economic development efforts, advocate for your business, and continue to advance Howard County as a competitive leader locally, regionally, and nationally.

Your support has strengthened us as the local leading voice for business. In the past few years, the Howard County Chamber of Commerce tracked hundreds of pieces of legislation, and also testified on a good number with significant impacts on county businesses. Howard County Chamber members have provided important testimonials on each Chamber-considered bill and offered expertise to assist in our advocacy.

This General Assembly handbook is for members to use in interacting with legislators and government officials. We hope it helps you and your business become better advocates for your success, and that of countless others across the county.

Thank you for investing in your business and in the future of Howard County.

Sincerely,



LEONARDO McCLARTY
Howard County Chamber
President and CEO

ABOUT THE CHAMBER

Our local chamber of commerce is the county's premiere business membership organization, and we are proud to call **nearly 700 businesses** of all sizes and from all industries members.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Howard County Chamber is to accelerate business growth through connections, advocacy, and professional development.

THE HOWARD COUNTY CHAMBER SUPPORTS POLICIES THAT:

- Have limited government involvement and allow market conditions to influence decision making;
- Are balanced and have predictable laws and regulations that promote economic development and do not lead to excessive costs on businesses or their customers; and
- Maintain consistent labor and employment policies between local, state, and federal laws, thereby enabling employers to manage its workforce in a fair and equitable manner.

POLICY COMMITTEES

OVERVIEW

The Howard County Chamber's subject matter subcommittees bring expertise and experience to the Chamber's advocacy efforts. These committees help guide the Chamber's agenda for policy areas including land use, transportation, economic development, labor, and cybersecurity and data privacy.

During Maryland's legislative session, the Legislative Affairs team reviews recently introduced bills and resolutions and identifies specific pieces of legislation of particular interest to our members. Each subcommittee will review the proposed legislation relevant to their expertise, and then decide which position the Chamber should take, if at all. Chamber positions can include: Support, Support with Amendment, Oppose, Hold/Monitor. This recommendation is then taken to the larger Legislative Affairs Committee, and subsequently, the Chamber's Board of Directors.

For more information or to join a committee, email Chamber President **Leonardo McClarty** at lmclarty@howardchamber.com.



LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

This committee develops the Chamber's position on legislation affecting the business community.



LAND USE & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

This committee covers all energy and environmental issues. Interest areas include renewable energy sources, storm water and waste management, pollution control, and land use and judicial review.



TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

This committee covers all transportation issues, coordinating a broad-based coalition of businesses, trade groups, and associations to advance short- and long-term solutions to state- wide transportation and transit needs.



BUSINESS REGULATION & OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

This committee addresses legislative and regulatory issues affecting daily operational activities of businesses, as well as all taxation issues impacting Maryland's tax climate with the goal of strengthening that climate to help attract and retain businesses, workers, and investment.



CYBERSECURITY & DATA PRIVACY COMMITTEE

This committee covers all issues relating to technology, cybersecurity, and data privacy. Privacy laws are continually evolving, varying by jurisdiction and interpretation. The same applies to cybersecurity, which is becoming increasingly complex with serious consequences: heavy fines, injunctions, government audits, even criminal liability.



EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

This committee covers issues addressing both education and workforce development that seek to address the need for Maryland's students to have affordable access to quality educational and skills-training systems that prepare them for college or career, and the need for Maryland's trades and businesses to hire and retain workers with the right skills and qualifications.



LABOR & EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

This committee covers all employment law and workplace regulation issues including mandatory paid leave, paid sick leave insurance, pre-emption of local laws on labor issues, public accommodation laws, non-compete agreements, \$15 minimum wage, and predictive/restrictive scheduling.

CORRESPONDENCE EXAMPLES

The following letters are samples to give you ideas about how to correspond with members of the Maryland General Assembly. Please note that Samples #1 and #2 are general letters, while Sample #3 is written for a specific piece of legislation and the effects it would have on your business. When you are asked to write regarding specific pieces of legislation, the Howard County Chamber of Commerce can provide you with all the necessary information and a tailored sample letter for your reference.

SAMPLE #1 **BUSINESS LETTER**

The Honorable [Legislator's Name]
[Legislator's office address]

[Date, if sending by mail]

SUBJECT: [Appropriate subject]

Dear [Del.] [Sen.] [Legislator's Last Name]:

Thank you for your support of jobs in the 2021 Legislative Session. As your constituent and a business owner, I am interested in the General Assembly's favorable treatment of businesses and the reduction of regulations in order continue operation. I am looking forward to your continued support of jobs and the businesses that create them.

Thank you for the work you do for the citizens of Maryland.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]
[Your Title]

CORRESPONDENCE EXAMPLES

SAMPLE #2 **GENERAL LETTER**

The Honorable [Legislator's Name]
[Legislator's office address]

[Date, if sending by mail]

SUBJECT: [Appropriate subject]

Dear [Del.] [Sen.] [Legislator's Last Name]:

Thank you for your continued support of jobs and economic development. As your constituent, I am most interested in the General Assembly's willingness to enhance the business climate in Maryland by reducing the number of regulations my business faces, and ensuring that the legislature does not pass other onerous mandates this session. The business community is a vital part of our state, creating jobs and expanding our economy. As such, it deserves your support.

Thank you for the work you do for the citizens of Maryland.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]
[Your Title]

CORRESPONDENCE EXAMPLES

SAMPLE #3 **SPECIFIC POLICY/CONCERN LETTER**

The Honorable [Legislator's Name]
[Legislator's office address]

[Date, if sending by mail]

SUBJECT: [Appropriate subject]

Dear [Del.] [Sen.] [Legislator's Last Name]:

I own a [number of employees] business in [location(s) of operation(s)]. I ask you to [support or oppose] [Legislation Name/Number] concerning [issue(s)]. This is an issue that has significant [positive or negative] impacts on my business and my employees.

This bill, if enacted, would [explain effects]. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]
[Your Title]

ADDRESSING PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Elected officials bear the “Honorable” address. Cabinet members are appointed and therefore do not bear the “Honorable” address. Note: Former officeholders and secretaries retain their honorifics after serving. Refer to them by the last office or position they held.

Position	In Writing	Salutation	In Conversation
Governor	The Honorable (full name) Governor of Maryland	Dear Gov. (last name)	Governor (last name)
Lt. Governor	The Honorable (full name) Lt. Governor of Maryland	Dear Lt. Gov. (last name)	Lt. Governor (last name)
Attorney General	The Honorable (full name) State of Maryland OR Attorney General, State of Maryland	Dear Mr./Madam Attorney General	Attorney General (last name)
Cabinet Secretary	Mr./Ms. (full name) Secretary of (department)	Dear Mr./Madam Secretary	Secretary (last name)
State Senator	The Honorable (full name) Maryland Senate	Dear Sen. (last name)	Senator (last name)
State Delegate	The Honorable (full name)	Dear Del. (last name)	Delegate (last name)
Mayor	The Honorable (full name) Mayor of (city)	Dear Mayor (last name)	Mayor (last name)
City Council	The Honorable (full name)	Dear Councilman/woman (last name)	Councilman/woman (last name)
U.S. Senator	The Honorable (full name) United States Senate	Dear Sen. (last name)	Senator (last name)
U.S. Representative	The Honorable (full name) U.S. House of Representatives	Dear Rep. (last name)	Congressman/woman

LEADERSHIP DIRECTORY

GOVERNOR

Wes Moore
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401
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LT. GOVERNOR

Aruna Miller
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TREASURER

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY LEADERSHIP

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

Senator Bill Ferguson (D-46)
H-107, State House
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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Adrienne Jones (D-10)
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HOUSE MAJORITY LEADER

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SENATE MAJORITY LEADER

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SENATE MINORITY LEADER

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HOUSE COMMITTEES

APPROPRIATIONS, CHAIR

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121 House Office Bldg.
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APPROPRIATIONS, VICE CHAIR

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ECONOMIC MATTERS, CHAIR

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ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION, CHAIR

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LEADERSHIP DIRECTORY

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WAYS AND MEANS, CHAIR

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WAYS AND MEANS, VICE CHAIR

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SENATE COMMITTEES

BUDGET AND TAXATION, CHAIR

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FINANCE, CHAIR

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JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS, VICE CHAIR

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(410) 841-3137

COMMITTEE HEARINGS

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO SUBMITTING WRITTEN TESTIMONY FOR THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1. In order to submit written testimony (or provide oral testimony), you must create a MyMGA Account through the Maryland General Assembly website.
 - a. Navigate to <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgaweb/site>
 - b. Click on the “MyMGA” icon on the top right-hand corner
 - c. Click “Create a MyMGA Tracking Account” or click “Register”
 - d. Enter the requested information in the required fields
 - e. Click “Register” at the bottom of the page
2. Once you’ve signed into your MyMGA Account, navigate to the Witness Signup page using the menu on the left hand.
3. All bills that are accepting oral/written testimony will be listed on this page. By using the committee drop-down tab, you can easily find the committee in which your bill is under.
 - a. If your bill is not listed, that bill may not be accepting testimony at this time
4. Once you’ve located your bill, select a position from that bill’s drop-down (i.e. favorable, unfavorable, etc.) and what type of testimony you’re going to provide (i.e. oral, written).
5. Once you’ve selected written testimony, an “Upload” button will appear. Click this button and then click the “Select Files” button on the pop-up window.
6. From here, navigate through your computer folders to locate/select the files you’d like to upload for your testimony and click open.
 - a. Files MUST be in PDF form for the system to save your sign up
 - b. You can upload up to 10 PDF files
7. Once you’ve added your files, click “Ok” to close the window.
8. If there is a check mark next to the bill number – you’ve successfully selected this bill.
9. Click “Save” at the top of the page to save your selection and testimony.
10. If you wish to edit your selected files after saving your selections, utilize the “Edit File(s)” button next to the bills you’ve signed up for.
 - a. You can add new files the same way you added the initial files
 - b. You can uncheck any files you wish to remove

COMMITTEE HEARINGS

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO SUBMITTING WRITTEN TESTIMONY FOR THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

11. If you wish to see a list of bills for which you're signed up for, click the "Signed Up Items" button .
 - a. If you wish to make changes, click "Witness Signup", find the bill, and make the necessary changes
12. Click the "Save" button anytime you make changes to any of the bills you've signed up for

***TO SEE A VISUAL STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE OF HOW TO SIGN UP AND UPLOAD TESTIMONY, VISIT:
[HTTPS://MGALEG.MARYLAND.GOV/MGAWEBSITE/INFORMATION/VIDEOTUTORIALS](https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/information/videtutorials)***

IMPORTANT NOTES REGARDING TESTIMONY

- If you have any questions regarding your signup or procedural information, contact the committee assigned to the bill and refer to their guidelines.
- Written testimony must, usually, be submitted two (2) days in advance of the hearing during the period of 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- Late testimony will not be accepted.

LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

DRAFTING

Bills can be requested by anyone for any reason; however, only a current legislator can introduce a bill.

INTRODUCTION

Once a bill is drafted and ready for introduction, it is presented to whichever chamber the legislator belongs. The Office of the Senate President or House Speaker will assign the bill a committee (or committees) where it will be heard.

COMMITTEE HEARING

The chair of the committee where the bill is assigned sets a hearing date where the sponsor will present and be met with proponents and opponents of the bill. (Not all bills are heard in committee.)

COMMITTEE VOTE

After the hearing, the committee debates and votes on the bill. During this time, legislators can request amendments and vote to either issue a favorable report, allowing the bill to advance, or an unfavorable report, killing the bill. They may also do nothing, which holds the bill in committee.

SECOND READER

If the bill receives a favorable report, it advances to the floor of its respective chamber where it will be read again and thus becomes a "second reader." Here, legislators can propose amendments, which must be approved by either the sponsor of the bill or a majority of legislators present.

THIRD READER

Barring any procedural motions, the bill is ordered to be printed for third reader. Once the bill hits third reader, no amendments can be made, and it can only be voted in favor (yea) or against (nay).

INTRODUCED IN OPPOSITE CHAMBER

If the bill passes third reader, it moves to the opposite chamber, where the whole process resets. If the bill is voted down, it dies and cannot be revised.

REPEAT IN OPPOSITE CHAMBER

The procedure is generally repetitive, except that when the bill is heard in the opposite chamber's committee, testimony is generally restricted to the sponsor and, depending on committee, one opponent. Amendments can be made in committee or second reader in this opposing chamber.

LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

SIGN/VETO

If the bill passes third reader in the opposite chamber and there are no differences from the version that passed the first and second chambers, then the bill has passed. It is sent to the governor, who can sign the bill into law, veto the bill (sending it back to the General Assembly), or allow the bill to become law without his signature. If the bill is vetoed, the General Assembly can override it with 3/5 margin in both chambers. If there are not enough votes to overturn the veto, the veto is sustained and the bill dies.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

If the bill passes both chambers, but has incurred amendments in the second chamber, a compromise bill is required. The leaders of the House and Senate assemble a conference committee. Once the conference committee issues its report, the compromise bill is presented to both chambers for a vote. If the chambers concur with the conference committee, the bill is passed and presented to the governor. If the chambers do not concur with the conference committee, the bill fails.

KEY TERMS

ADOPT

To approve an action (i.e., an amendment, committee report, motion).

AMEND

To make a change in a bill or a law.

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S BILL LETTERS

The letters that examine the legal sufficiency of the bills passed by the General Assembly. The Attorney General's Office prepares the letters and submits The report a committee submits them to the governor before the approval or veto of bills.

BILL

A proposed law presented for referred for approval to a legislative body.

BILL NUMBER

The number the secretary of the Senate or the chief clerk of the House assigns to a bill at the time of introduction. The bill retains the same number if it moves to the opposite chamber.

BILL STATUS

The current standing of a bill.

CHAIR

The presiding officer of a chamber or of a committee.

CHAPTER NUMBER

The number the secretary of state assigns to a bill after the governor signs the bill. Chapter numbers are issued in the numerical order in which the bills are signed.

CODE

The Annotated Code of Maryland, the codified statutory laws of Maryland.

COMMITTEE REPORT

The report a committee submits to the chambers listing actions approval or veto of bills. taken on bills (i.e., favorable, favorable with amendments, unfavorable, re-referred, or referred for interim study).

COMMITTEE REPORTING COURTESY DATES

The date by which each chamber's committees report their own bills to the floor.

COMMITTEE REPRINT

The reprinting of a bill to include committee amendments.

CONCUR

One chamber approves an action taken by the other chamber.

KEY TERMS

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Three members from each chamber, or five in the case of the budget conference committee (appointed by the presiding officers), who work to resolve the differences in a bill passed by both chambers. A bill does not pass the General Assembly unless each chamber passes the bill in identical form.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT

The report the conference committee submits to the chambers for final passage of a bill. The report may consist of adopting, rejecting, or adding amendments. Each chamber must adopt the report and then vote for final passage of the bill.

CROSSOVER DATE

Each chamber sends to the other chamber those bills it passes favorably by this date.

ENACTED

A bill is enacted when the bill becomes a law (i.e., is signed by the governor) and takes effect.

ENROLLED (PASSED ENROLLED)

A bill is an enrolled bill if it was amended in the opposite chamber.

FAILED

A bill's status after failing to receive a majority vote on the chamber floor.

FIRST READER

A bill as printed for the first time with its assigned bill number.

FIRST READING

Introduction of a bill in its presenting legislator's chamber, where it is "read across the desk" for the first time and assigned to a standing committee.

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

An analysis prepared by the Department of Legislative Services of a bill's impact on state and local revenues and expenditures. It also identifies any mandated appropriations in the state budget and any mandates on local governments; describes the impact on small businesses; describes current law; and, if relevant, outlines the background relating to the proposal. Beginning with the 2017 session, a fiscal and policy note is "revised" when an adopted amendment necessitates a change; a fiscal and policy note is also "revised" if it is changed for any other reason.

FISCAL YEAR

For Maryland's government, July 1 - June 30.

FLOOR

That portion of the chamber reserved for members and officers of the assembly or other persons granted access.

KEY TERMS

GREEN BAG

The bag in which gubernatorial appointments that require legislative approval are delivered to the chamber floors. Such appointments are submitted to the General Assembly by the 40th day of the session (Art. II, Sec. 13, MD Constitution).

GUARANTEE DATE

The cutoff date for a bill to be guaranteed a committee hearing in its chamber of origin.

JOINT RESOLUTION

A resolution passed in both chambers as a statement on a public issue, a request of the governor or a government office, or establishment of a task force. With certain exceptions, joint resolutions do not have the effect of law.

LAID OVER

Postponement of floor action on an amended bill for one legislative day.

LEGISLATIVE DAY

Length of time from convening a session in the chamber until adjournment; may be longer or shorter than a calendar day (e.g., a session that continues into a second calendar day without adjourning is one legislative day). If a chamber adjourns and reconvenes on the same day, that constitutes two legislative days.

LR

An identifying number given by the Department of Legislative Services to a bill request until the bill is introduced and assigned a bill number. A bill becomes public only when assigned a bill number.

MOTION

Proposal of an action.

MOVE THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

Ending debate and returning to the question on the floor.

PASSED

The status of a bill receiving a favorable vote by the majority of legislators.

PREFILED

The status of a bill drafted, by request, by the Department of Legislative Services prior to a legislative session for introduction in that session. Prefiling dates are set by law.

QUORUM

The minimum number of members of a chamber or committee required for the transaction of business.

KEY TERMS

QUORUM CALL

Action used to establish the presence of the majority required to transact business.

REASSIGNED

Assignment of a bill from one committee to another.

REFERRED

The action of assigning a legislative measure to a committee or committees.

REFERRED FOR INTERIM STUDY

The status of a bill when a committee asks to study it during the nine-month interim.

RE-REFERRED

The status of a bill reassigned to a different committee after the original referral.

REFERENDUM

The power of the registered voters, under certain conditions, to petition an act of the last General Assembly, with certain exceptions, for approval or disapproval at the next general election.

REJECT

The voting down or failing of an action (e.g., an amendment).

RETURNED PASSED

The status of a bill passed in its chamber of origin and returned by the opposite chamber without amendments.

ROLL CALL

The recording of names of members present in the chamber to establish a quorum or to take a vote on an issue before the body.

SECOND READING

The status of a bill reported out of committee and brought to the chamber floor for preliminary approval. Committee and floor amendments may be added to the bill at this time. (The bill is not reprinted for second reading.)

SIMPLE RESOLUTION

A form of legislative measure introduced in only one chamber of the General Assembly and used for the regulation of business only within the chamber of origin.

SINE DIE

The final adjournment of a session, without adjourning to a specific time or date. Informally, the last day of the legislative session.

KEY TERMS

SESSION LAWS

The compilation of all the chapters (the bills the governor signs) from a legislative session.

SPECIAL ORDER

Postpones floor action on a bill until a definite date or time.

SUNSET PROVISION

Provides that a provision of the law is automatically repealed on a specific date, unless the General Assembly reenacts the law.

SUSPEND THE RULES

To set aside the rules temporarily by a 2/3 vote to allow a certain action.

THIRD READER

A bill that is printed after second reading in the chamber of origin, including adopted amendments.

THIRD READING

The final vote on a bill in each chamber. The third reading vote is recorded.

VETO

Action the governor takes to prevent enactment of a bill passed by the General Assembly. At the next session the General Assembly may override the governor's veto with a 3/5 vote in each chamber (except in an election year when overrides are not feasible).

DATES OF INTEREST

JAN

10

GENERAL ASSEMBLY CONVENES

19

SENATE AND HOUSE BILL REQUEST GUARANTEE DATE

Final date for Governor to introduce budget bill and capital budget bill

Final date for submission of Executive Orders reorganizing the Executive Branch of State Government; either Chamber may disapprove by resolution within 50 days

22

Administration bills introduced in the Senate after this date referred to Senate Rules Committee

TBA

Governor delivers State of the State address

FEB

5

SENATE BILL INTRODUCTION DATE

Senate bills introduced after this date referred to the Senate Rules Committee

8

In order to meet the bill introduction date, House bills must be filed with the Chief Clerk's office by 5:00 P.M.

10

HOUSE BILL INTRODUCTION DATE

House bills introduced after this date referred to the House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee

18

"Green Bag" appointments submitted by Governor

DATES OF INTEREST

MAR

4

Final date for introduction of bills without suspension of rules

12

Committee Reporting Courtesy Date

Each Chamber's committees to report their own bills by this date

18

Opposite Chamber Bill Crossover Date

Each Chamber to send to other Chamber those bills it intends to pass favorably

Opposite Chamber bills received after this date subject to referral to Rules Committees

APR

1

Budget bill to be passed by both Chambers

8

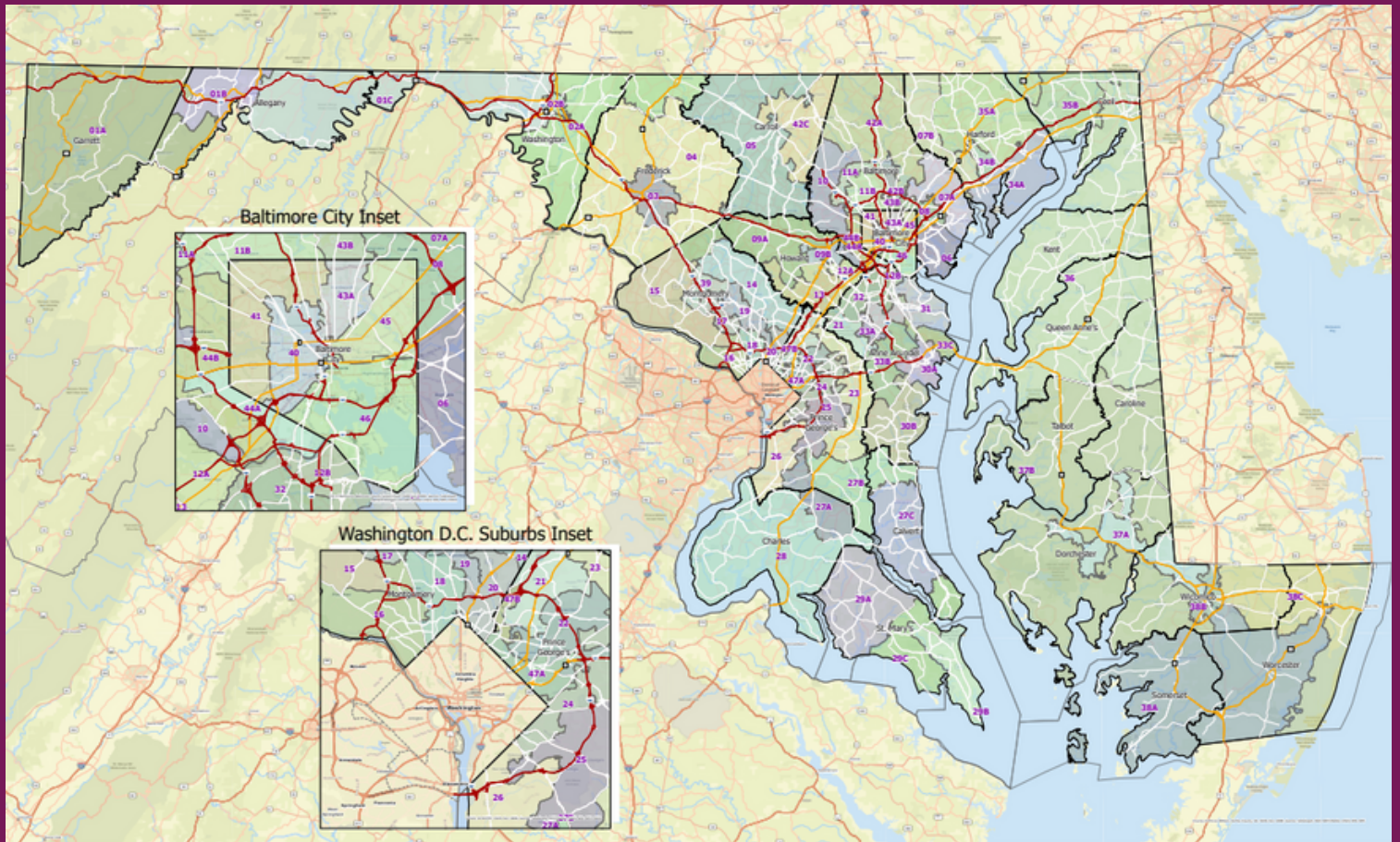
ADJOURNMENT "SINE DIE"

MAY

8

Final date for an extended session

DISTRICT MAP



SOURCE: <https://planning.maryland.gov/Redistricting/Documents/2020Maps/Cong/2022-CongDist-SW.pdf>

CHAMBER CONTACTS

Public Policy Team

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Jennifer Jones - Howard County Economic
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Rory Murray - Providence Strategies LLC

Tafia Pringle - Lincoln Tech

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