CHAMBER NEWS & UPDATES

March events!

Thank you to everyone who joined us for the 50th Gala! We hope you had a great evening of laughing, dancing, and sharing memories of the Chamber's history.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- March 12 - New Member Luncheon
- March 16 - Ribbon Cutting – Method Gym
- March 26 - Women's Luncheon – Sue Ann Armitage
- March 27 - Business After Hours –Above Par Golf & Entertainment
- April 5 - Ribbon Cutting – St. Mary's Art Council
- April 13 - National Civics Bee – Live Event
- April 18 - Legislative Review Breakfast
- April 23 - Women's Luncheon
- April 24 - Business After Hours – St. Mary's Caring
- April 25 - Ribbon Cutting – Noble

New Member Lunches RESUMED!

New member lunches are making a comeback! The next luncheon will be March 12, 2024, at Mac's Tap and Table. This event is a great opportunity to try some new food and meet some new people. We hope to see you there!

Pre-registration required. See here.

Women's Lunch Series - Sue Ann Armitage

Tuesday, March 26, 2024
12:00p.m.

Pax River Ale House
46590 Corporate Dr.
Lexington Park, MD

Learn about future family law!

Must pre-register here.

Ribbon Cutting: Method Gym

Saturday, March 16, 2024
10AM
San Souci Plaza
Lexington Park, MD

Help us celebrate the opening of a new facility for Method Gym!

Pre-register here.

New Member Highlight!

The Chamber would like to acknowledge our newest members and say thank you for your partnership!

Special Thanks to:

- Adriani Brothers Construction
- Charles County Office Furniture
- Equity Resources, Inc.
- HCW Creative Designs, LLC
- Hollywood Used Auto Parts
- J Browne Excavating
- J4 Aviation
- KBR
- Summer Breeze Farms, LLC
- The Beanery & Cafe

Want to see your business here?Click here for registration to become a member.

National Civics Bee® Essay Live Event - April 13th

This is such an exciting opportunity! Middle school students are invited to write an essay on an issue that concerns them in their community and how they can have an impact through the lens of civics. Attendees at the live event are also encouraged to test their civics knowledge along with the students.

The winners now move on to the next round of competition: a live quiz event to test their civics knowledge. The St. Mary's County Chamber of Commerce will host this live event on April 13th, 2024 at Cole Cinema, St. Mary's College of Maryland, co-sponsored by the Center for the Study of Democracy and the Educational Systems Federal Credit Union. The finalists and top winners will receive various prizes, including $500 cash for the first-place student.

Sponsors can help unlock the potential of future leaders by sponsoring the Live Bee and supporting the next generation of informed and engaged citizens. All are welcome to attend the Live Civis Bee, but pre-registration required. To register for the live event, see this link.

More info about the Bee here or call 301-737-3001 to learn more.Sponsor registration here.

Interested in Joining the Chamber?

By joining the Chamber, you can boost your business's visibility and gain access to exclusive perks such as promotion for your business or organization, discounted access to our events, networking, and educational series, opportunity to weigh in on legislative bills, voice your concerns to elected officials, use of our conference room as meeting space, and more!

For more information clickhere.

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www.wmdavis.com

Are you considering hosting a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for your business?

The Chamber is here to help you make it happen! These ceremonies are perfect for celebrating a special anniversary, launching a new product or service, or expanding your business. We will advertise the event, invite county government officials, and provide the giant scissors and ribbon. Get in touch with us to discuss scheduling for your event.

301-737-3001 or **info@smcchamber.com**

Pay It Forward Partnership with the Chamber

The "Pay It Forward Partnership" initiative simplifies offers with a one-time annual payment, making it easier to budget and support promotional benefits for the Chamber's regular annual events, and it includes annual dues. You can choose which events you would like to sponsor and have your name associated with, and, of course, you always have the option to sponsor any event you prefer.

- **Platinum Partner** $10,000 Annual Investment
- **Gold Partner** $7,500 Annual Investment
- **Silver Partner** $5,000 Annual Investment
- **Bronze Partner** $2,500 Annual Investment

Call or visit the Chamber website for more info.

First Annual Kentuckey Derby
Support your favorite Non-Profit & Submit games for the Fundraiser

Looking for a fun filled competition with other chamber members while supporting your favorite non-profit? Our 1st Annual Kentucky Derby event is for you. Let the games begin!

Saturday, May 4, 2024
St. Mary's Airport Terminal

Chamber non-profit members: If your organization is interested in raising money, running one game of chance, and having fun - this is for you. Each non-profit member is invited to run one interactive game and keep the proceeds.

Your non-profit provides everything needed to run the game. All personnel entering to run game must purchase a $40 entry ticket to join in on the fun. Only 1 game per charity and no like games from other charities to compete.

First come, first serve!!

Send your game proposal and specifics, along with the size requirements to info@smcchamber.com.

Chamber members: For an entry fee of $250, you can join in competition. You may then purchase our memorable chamber 50th Anniversary keychains/bottle openers ($1 each, 50 minimum). You can resell the keychains for as much or as little as you'd like with the ultimate goal of donating the funds you raise for your selected charity.

To make it fun and raise the stakes, the company that earns the most money for their charity will be able to choose the top horse at our Derby party. Competition results announced at every BAH starting in January 2024.

Day of event tickets: $40 per person.
Prizes for best dressed, best hat, best jockey outfit!

Sponsorships and keychains here. Tickets here.

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
MARYLAND TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (MDOT MTA)

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

(Aviso de Audiencias Públicas)

MTA gives notice of five public hearings on proposed service changes affecting 34 Commuter Bus routes. The proposal includes discontinuing eight Commuter Bus routes and service reductions to 26 routes. The service changes would become effective on Monday, July 01, 2024.

Complete details of the proposed service changes are available for public review in the Transit Store and the lobby of the William Donald Schaefer Building at 6 St. Paul Street in Baltimore and online at mta.maryland.gov/commuter-bus2024.

Individuals and organizations are invited to provide testimony for the official record. Public hearings will be conducted in person, and virtually. Testimony can be provided via video or phone during virtual hearings.

Schedule of Public Hearings

Monday, March 18, 2024
7:00 PM – 9:00 PM
Virtual only
Meeting ID: 842 1058 7046

Thursday, March 21, 2024
7:00 PM – 9:00 PM
Virtual only
Meeting ID: 842 1058 7046

Saturday, March 23, 2024
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Virtual only
Meeting ID: 842 1058 7046

Tuesday, March 26, 2024
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
Michael E. Busch Annapolis Library
1410 West Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Wednesday, March 27, 2024
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
George Howard Building
Banneker Room
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Virtual Participation: Broadcast Live Online and via Telephone

- Testimony will be provided via audio only.
- To access a virtual hearing online visit mta.maryland.gov/commuter-bus202 and click the link to the hearing session.
- Advance registration is encouraged to provide comments, though not required. Please register, by 5:00 PM the day before the hearing at which you wish to speak, at mta.maryland.gov/commuter-bus2024 or call 410-767-3999.
- Access via telephone at 301-715-8592 and enter the meeting ID for the hearing session. Advance registration to provide testimony via telephone is not available.

Written testimony may be submitted via email to HearingComments@mta.maryland.gov with "Written Testimony" as the subject heading. Testimony may also be mailed to MTA, Office of Customer Relations, 6 St. Paul Street, Baltimore, MD 21202. MTA will accept written testimony for the official public hearing record through Monday, April 29, 2024

Locations are accessible for people with disabilities. Sign Language interpretation will be provided. Please contact the department listed below to arrange for: special assistance or additional accommodation to participate in this public hearing; printed material in an alternate format or translated; and an interpreter. All requests must be received one week in advance.

Los sitios tienen acceso para personas con discapacidades. Por favor comuníquese con el departamento listado a continuación para concertar arreglos para: ayuda especial o adaptaciones adicionales; material impreso en un formato alternativo o traducido; personas sordas y personas que solicitan un(a) intérprete. Todas las solicitudes deben ser recibidas con una semana de antelación.

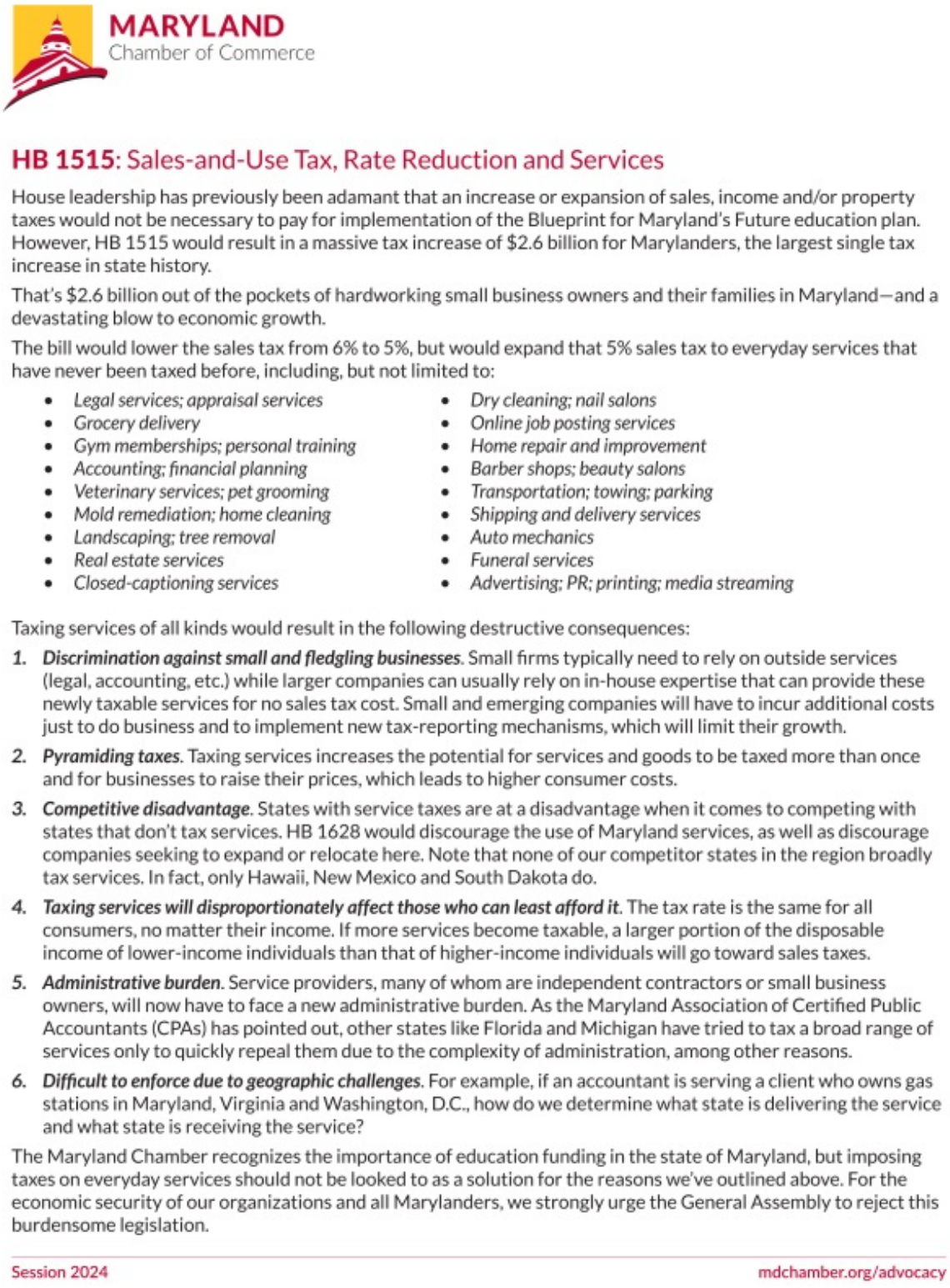
MDOT MTA Transit Information Contact Center
410-539-5000 | 866-743-3682 | MD Relay users dial 7-1-1
(Usuarios de Relay Maryland marquen 7-1-1)

MDOT MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
MARYLAND TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION

Maryland Chamber of Commerce: HB 1515 and FAMLI Regulations

The St. Mary's County Chamber of Commerce opposes the bill 1515 proposed by the Maryland

Chamber. Contact your local legislation to see how these bills affect you and suggest changes.



MARYLAND
Chamber of Commerce

HB 1515: Sales-and-Use Tax, Rate Reduction and Services

House leadership has previously been adamant that an increase or expansion of sales, income and/or property taxes would not be necessary to pay for implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future education plan. However, HB 1515 would result in a massive tax increase of $2.6 billion for Marylanders, the largest single tax increase in state history.

That's $2.6 billion out of the pockets of hardworking small business owners and their families in Maryland—and a devastating blow to economic growth.

The bill would lower the sales tax from 6% to 5%, but would expand that 5% sales tax to everyday services that have never been taxed before, including, but not limited to:

- *Legal services; appraisal services*
- *Grocery delivery*
- *Gym memberships; personal training*
- *Accounting; financial planning*
- *Veterinary services; pet grooming*
- *Mold remediation; home cleaning*
- *Landscaping; tree removal*
- *Real estate services*
- *Closed-captioning services*
- *Dry cleaning; nail salons*
- *Online job posting services*
- *Home repair and improvement*
- *Barber shops; beauty salons*
- *Transportation; towing; parking*
- *Shipping and delivery services*
- *Auto mechanics*
- *Funeral services*
- *Advertising; PR; printing; media streaming*

Taxing services of all kinds would result in the following destructive consequences:

1. ***Discrimination against small and fledgling businesses***. Small firms typically need to rely on outside services (legal, accounting, etc.) while larger companies can usually rely on in-house expertise that can provide these newly taxable services for no sales tax cost. Small and emerging companies will have to incur additional costs just to do business and to implement new tax-reporting mechanisms, which will limit their growth.
2. ***Pyramiding taxes***. Taxing services increases the potential for services and goods to be taxed more than once and for businesses to raise their prices, which leads to higher consumer costs.
3. ***Competitive disadvantage***. States with service taxes are at a disadvantage when it comes to competing with states that don't tax services. HB 1628 would discourage the use of Maryland services, as well as discourage companies seeking to expand or relocate here. Note that none of our competitor states in the region broadly tax services. In fact, only Hawaii, New Mexico and South Dakota do.
4. ***Taxing services will disproportionately affect those who can least afford it***. The tax rate is the same for all consumers, no matter their income. If more services become taxable, a larger portion of the disposable income of lower-income individuals than that of higher-income individuals will go toward sales taxes.
5. ***Administrative burden***. Service providers, many of whom are independent contractors or small business owners, will now have to face a new administrative burden. As the Maryland Association of Certified Public Accountants (CPAs) has pointed out, other states like Florida and Michigan have tried to tax a broad range of services only to quickly repeal them due to the complexity of administration, among other reasons.
6. ***Difficult to enforce due to geographic challenges***. For example, if an accountant is serving a client who owns gas stations in Maryland, Virginia and Washington, D.C., how do we determine what state is delivering the service and what state is receiving the service?

The Maryland Chamber recognizes the importance of education funding in the state of Maryland, but imposing taxes on everyday services should not be looked to as a solution for the reasons we've outlined above. For the economic security of our organizations and all Marylanders, we strongly urge the General Assembly to reject this burdensome legislation.

Session 2024 mdchamber.org/advocacy

MARYLAND
Chamber of Commerce

Update: FAMLI Regulations

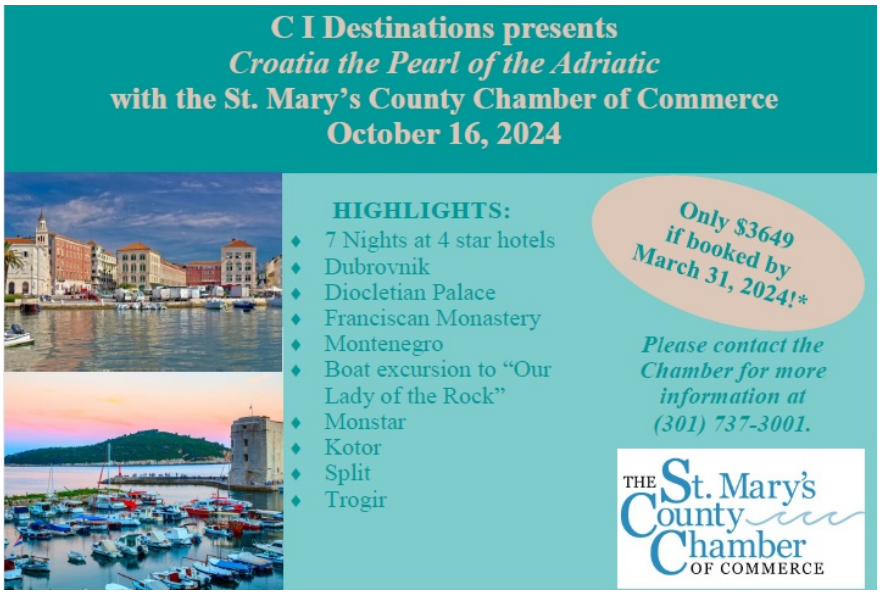
Last month, the Maryland Department of Labor issued draft regulations to implement Maryland's paid family and medical leave insurance (FAMLI) law. Starting January 1, 2026, this law will provide most Maryland employees with 12 weeks of paid family and medical leave, with the possibility of an additional 12 weeks of paid parental leave.

Learn more about these laws and how they can affect you[here.](here.)

SAVE THE DATES!

Now Announcing Croatia, the Pearl of the Adriatic Trip with the Chamber

Discount Deadline: March 31, 2024



Discover the stunning beauty of Croatia, the Pearl of the Adriatic, with C I Destinations. Experience 7 nights at a luxurious 4-star hotel, scenic tours, and more on October 16, 2024. **Book your trip before March 31, 2024, and enjoy this incredible offer for only $3649**. For more information, don't hesitate to contact the Chamber at 301-737-3001. Take advantage of this fantastic opportunity!

Airfare included! Application and more info here.

MEMBER NEWS

Procurement Connections Workshop

Wednesday, March 20, 2024 @9:30

10440 Little Patuxent Parkway (9th floor)
Columbia, MD

This free Procurement Connections Workshop will provide insight into the different programs offered by the Governer's Office. This workshop will focus on strategies to identify which agencies buy what you sell. Speakers include: Calvin Ball, Brooke E. Lierman, and Maria Martinez

Register here.

Updates!

There has been another update to the new online portal for Maryland business taxpayers,

The Patuxent Partnership: Upcoming Events

My Women's History presentation with Ms. Leslie

go check it out!

The Office of the Comptroller is working towards accepting the private letter ruling (PLR) petitions. The acceptance of PLR is binding to the Comptroller, meaning that the taxpayer has financial certainty regarding transactions and reduced financial risk. The PLR is binding on the Comptroller for seven years, unless revoked.

The Comptroller will be participating at the Catonsville Chamber of Commerce Roundtable on Wednesday, March 27, 8-11a.m. More information on this event can be found here.

D. Taylor, former Vice Commander of the Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR)

Wednesday, March 13, 2024
8:30a.m.-10:00a.m.
University System of Maryland Southern Maryland (USMSM), Building 2, Center Hall
44219 Airport Rd. California, MD
Register here.

TPP 2024 Defense Summit

Wednesday, March 27, 2024
8:00a.m.-4:30p.m
USMSM, Building 3 (SMART)
44219 Airport Rd. California, MD
Registration Closes March 25th
Preregistration Cost:
TPP Member: $125
Non-Member: $225
Federal Civilians/Active Duty: no cost (excluding lunch)

St. Mary's College of Maryland: Career & Internship Fair

Tuesday, March 26, 10:00a.m.-2:00p.m.

Michael P. O'Brien Athletics and Recreation Center (ARC) Recreational Courts, St. Mary's City, MD

This event is a great way for students and employers to network. Employers can use this as an opportunity to hire interns, connect with current students, and provide information about their industry.

Deadline to Register: Friday, March 8 @5p.m.

Maryland Day 2024

Monday, March 25, 2024

St. Clement's Island Museum
38370 Point Breeze Rd, Coltons Point, MD 20626

Celebrate Maryland Pride with the St. Mary's County Museum Division. Free access to the museum, free boat rides, free lighthouse tours, kids activities, food trucks, and so much more!

A Catholic Mass will be held at 10a.m. and the Official Ceremony begins at 2p.m.

RSVP by March 18th to 301-769-2222 or karen.stone@stmaryscountymd.gov

More information on their Facebook page.

Lexington Park Facade and Streetscape Improvement Program Update

The intent of the *Lexington Park Façade and Streetscape Improvement Program* is to create a positive visual impact, stimulate private investment, improve actual and perceived safety, and complement public community revitalization efforts in the historic commercial core of Lexington Park, delineated in the Lexington Park Master Plan as the "Downtown" and "Great Mills Corridor." The *Lexington Park*

Property Tax Challenge Information Update

St. Mary's County seeks to stimulate and incentivize investment in commercial real property. The Property Tax Challenge supports renovations, rehabilitation, and upgrades of commercial real property. Commercial property owners in challenged areas who invest at least 10% of the property's assessed value at a minimum of $25,000 are eligible for this program. Those who qualify will not see an

Façade and Streetscape Improvement Program will reimburse a portion of the expenses incurred by commercial property and/or business owners who complete projects that rehabilitate their buildings, storefronts, and/or the streetscapes located adjacent to their buildings and businesses. The funding for this program is provided to the County through a Community Legacy grant from Maryland's Department of Housing and Community Development.

For more information click here.

increase in their County property taxes for either a seven- or ten-year period.

For more information click here.

There's always something going on in Leonardtown!

Visit here to learn more.

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