

March 20, 2017

House Passes Income Tax Forgiveness Bill Unanimously

HB 1433, forgiving 73 municipalities from having to repay misdirected income tax funds, passed **by unanimous vote in the House last week!** The House vote follows another unanimous vote in the Senate three weeks ago on an identical bill which means that **cities and towns will NOT have to reimburse the state nearly \$16 million for income tax monies municipalities received in error from the Comptroller.** MML has been given assurances that the Governor intends to sign the successful legislation.

Municipal officials are requested to take the time to thank your Delegates and Senator for their support on HB 1433 and SB 397!!

Municipal Transportation Grants Still in Play

In the House-passed version of the State budget, municipal transportation grant monies were left intact at \$20,109,551, which is in addition to the base HUR distribution of approximately \$7.1 million. Both amounts would be allocated via the HUR formula. This represents an increase of approximately \$1 million of the allocation in the current fiscal year. The Senate's version of the budget, which should be on the Senate floor later this week, also includes the same \$20,109,551 amount earmarked for municipalities. MML continues to advocate for the passage of the League's priority legislation to reinstate municipal HURs into the future. The House and Senate versions of the budget will go to conference committee once the Senate passes their version of the budget.

Stormwater Legislation on the Move

MML's priority legislation to require all levels of government to pay a stormwater management fee on properties located in another jurisdiction has passed the House. [HB 656](#) was amended in the House to take into consideration those properties that operate under their own MS4 stormwater permits to ensure that these properties are not double charged. The bill now moves to the Senate for consideration.

Foreclosure Bills Now Under Consideration in the Senate

A suite of bills supported by MML and a host of other advocates have all passed the House and are now in the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee for consideration. [HB 702](#) puts in place a process to expedite foreclosures so that properties are not sitting vacant and abandoned for extended periods of time. [HB 954](#) requires the Department of Labor Licensing and Regulation

(DLLR) to require a purchaser of a property in foreclosure to send updated contact information to be added to the State's foreclosure registry. The bill also requires the Department to send updated information to the local government where the property is located. Finally, [HB 1048](#) requires that a person who sells properties subject to foreclosure file a notice with DLLR providing information about the property in foreclosure to allow a local government to better track and identify properties in foreclosure. The Judicial Proceedings Committee now must vote favorably on these bills to ensure that they receive final passage during the 2017 General Assembly session.

Special Event Recycling Requirements Strengthened

Legislation introduced (SB 885/HB 1309) [Recycling Special Events](#) to encourage recycling at special events was passed as amended by both the House and Senate. The legislation, which was opposed by MML as introduced, was amended to remove high penalties and a requirement that local governments enforce the mandate. The per-day penalty imposed on organizers of special events was increased to an amount not to exceed \$300 per day and a provision was added whereby a local government must notify an organizer of an event expected to attract over 200 attendees that recycling at the event is mandatory. A State or local government sponsored event is not included in the mandatory recycling requirements under current law, and this bill does not change that provision.

Forest Conservation Act to be Studied over the Interim

Legislation introduced to impose significantly stricter requirements under the State Forest Conservation Act was amended in the Senate to instead put in place a task force to study the issue. The bill, as introduced was opposed by MML and other stakeholders, citing the fact that the more stringent reforestation mandates in the bill were unworkable in urban jurisdictions. The task force language included in the amended version of SB 365 [Forest Conservation Act Task Force](#) was not done in consultation with the opponents. Based on concerns expressed over the language in the Senate Bill, the House Environment and Transportation Committee is currently working on revised language to better balance the make-up of the task force and the objectives of the body.

SB 705 – Award of Attorney's Fees in Certain Cases Against Governments in Maryland

After delaying its vote on [SB 705](#) for about a week, the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee voted on the bill favorably with amendments. The amendments allow for attorney's fees to be collected in cases of an alleged violation of certain sections of the Maryland Constitution and Declaration of Rights by a government. As written, the bill is problematic for the Local Government Insurance Trust (LGIT) as it may cause a rise in premiums for LGIT members. MML staff is actively working in conjunction with MACo and LGIT to mitigate the effect of this bill.

Local Zoning and Energy Facilities Siting

Senate bills [851](#) and [931](#) were heard last week in the Senate Finance Committee. Both bills address local zoning as it pertains to the siting of utility scale energy projects. At the conclusion

of the hearing, Chairman Middleton asked the stakeholders to work together on amendments to the bills that would bring them closer together. Amendments are in the process of being crafted with the goal of strengthening the local government voice in this area.

Bills Affecting Water Service Providers, Opposed by MML, Are Considered in Committee

[HB 918](#), which would have mandated that each water service provider create a prescriptive water affordability program, was voted down in a House committee last week. The same House committee has delayed a vote on [HB 228](#) while an amendment was offered that would turn this bill into a summer study on water service issues.

Body Camera Bill Voted Down in Committee

A bill that would have established a framework for disseminating or denying police body camera footage under the Public Information Act was voted unfavorably in Senate committee last week, [SB 970](#). This bill was supported by MML.

There's Still Time To Talk, Maryland

Since President Tracy Gant's *Time to Talk* Maryland initiative launched in October, many municipalities have let the League know what they are doing to facilitate difficult discussions among citizens and officials. MML is pleased to offer other ways to get involved with the initiative, all about inclusion and unity.

- **Inclusion PSA** – Distribute the League's second [Public Service Announcement](#) to your local cable access networks and via your town's website and social media accounts.
- **Eastern Shore Regional Forum** - Mediators, facilitators and community leaders will gather in Salisbury, MD on April 27 to provide insight on how to conduct community conversations.
- **Summer Conference Workshop** –Tuesday, June 27 cities/towns that have previously conducted an event encouraging community dialogue across tough topics will provide pointers on how to keep the lines of communication open among your officials, staff and residents during these tenuous times.
- Continue to spread the word about what both you and the League are doing via social media by using the hashtag #TimeToTalkMD
- If your region is interested in hosting a forum, contact [Tom Reynolds](#), MML Education Director.

Join Your Colleagues in Ocean City!

Greensboro Town Manager Jeannette DeLude was the first person to register for MML's summer conference, which will be held June 25-28, 2017 at the Convention Center in Ocean City. Greensboro is a small Eastern Shore town (population 1,873) whose officials value the training and networking opportunities at MML's summer conference. Ms. DeLude commented, "I look forward to attending MML's summer conference each year for all the wonderful classes that

are offered and the exceptional networking opportunities. MML conferences are definitely the best bang for your buck when it comes to training for municipal staff and elected officials.” To date, 80 officials from 27 cities and towns have registered, saving money by registering early. Registration fees and ticket **prices will increase on April 18**. You will save even more money if you register [on-line](#). Details about MML’s summer conference are on MML’s [website](#) and in the March issue of *Municipal Maryland*.

Municipal Main Street

Plan to visit the 40+ booths on Municipal Main Street during MML’s summer conference. Get great ideas from your fellow cities and towns. Be a Main Street tenant and share your great ideas and showcase your city or town. The following have already signed up for 2017: **Bel Air, Berlin, Boonsboro, Cambridge, Carroll County Main Streets (Mount Airy, Sykesville, Taneytown, Westminster), Chesapeake Beach, Cumberland, Delmar, Denton, Easton, Elkton, Federalsburg, Forest Heights, Frederick, Havre de Grace, Laurel, Municipal Clerks Association, Municipal Code Enforcement and Zoning Officials Association, Municipal Engagement & Outreach Committee, Municipal Parks and Recreation, Middletown, MML Police Executives Association, North Beach, Oakland, Ocean City, Perryville, Pocomoke City, Port Towns (Bladensburg, Colmar Manor, Cottage City, Edmonston), Salisbury, St. Michaels, Seat Pleasant, Snow Hill, Williamsport, and Women in Government Service**. Details may be found on the MML [website](#).

Conflict Resolution Workshop at Summer Conference

This year’s MML summer conference will include the workshop “Resolving Municipal Conflict: There’s Got to be a Better Way,” and the instructors for the session would love to hear from municipal officials about the types of conflicts you are facing in your cities and towns. Are they intergovernmental? Land use oriented? Perhaps with members of the community itself? If you would like to hear the instructors speak to a particular type of challenge, let us know and the instructors will do their best to work it into the discussion. Examples can be very general in nature and all requests will be shared anonymously. Simply send your comments to MML Education Services Director [Tom Reynolds](#). The Resolving Municipal Conflict session will take place on Tuesday, June 27, 9-10:15 a.m. in Ocean City.

New Leadership Class for Academy Graduates

How do good negotiation skills advance our ability to build improved local government effectiveness and civility? Captain Mark Adamshick, USN (ret.), Ph.D., has taught leadership at the U.S. Naval Academy, West Point, and the University of Maryland. On June 6, 2017 Captain Adamshick will guide municipal and county officials through a day of training specially designed to improve your leadership skills by applying a principled approach to negotiation.

This class will take place at the Local Government Insurance Trust (LGIT) offices in Hanover, Maryland and is open only to graduates of the Academy for Excellence in Local Governance. You will find complete information, including how to register, [here](#).

Incident Management Team Workshop

The Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), in an effort to build the state's capacity to support complex, multi-operational period incidents, has begun the process of developing a State Incident Management Team (IMT). Jurisdictional support is an important part of this effort, and MEMA has asked that municipal representatives throughout the state consider sending a representative to attend a statewide IMT workshop on Wednesday, March 29, 2017 at Anne Arundel Community College, 101 College Parkway, Arnold, Maryland in Room 10 of the Florestano Building. This important event will take place from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon.

If you plan to attend, please [RSVP](#) no later than March 24, 2017. More information on the State Incident Management Team can be found [here](#).

Climate Change/Sea Level Rise Conference in Easton, April 1

The Eastern Shore is the third most susceptible region to the effects of sea level rise in the country. The Eastern Shore Land Conservancy (ESLC), a progressive, environmentally-focused nonprofit organization headquartered in Easton, will host a half-day conference, **Unsinkable Eastern Shore II: Rural America Responds to Climate Change**, on Saturday, April 1 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The conference will be held at the Eastern Shore Conservation Center – the former McCord laundry facility which ESLC rehabilitated and since 2015 has occupied with several other conservation groups.

The cost is \$20 and includes breakfast, two panel discussions, and presentations by two keynote speakers. Also included is a copy of speaker John Englander's book *High Tide on Main Street*, which *Politico Magazine* called "one of the 50 most important books to read in 2016." Attendees may register [online](#) and are encouraged to do so soon, as seating is limited.

Municipal Main Street
Showcase your Municipality during the MML Summer Conference
[Details Here](#)

Classifieds

Classified advertisements from Maryland cities, towns, counties, and government agencies will be published in MML's *e-Bulletin* at no charge. If you would like to advertise an **employment opportunity, a request for proposals, or a piece of equipment for sale** within the State of Maryland, please e-mail the ad copy, in a text only word doc, 200 words or less to [classified](#). Ads will appear for a 90-day period and can be resubmitted for posting if needed.

[Legislative Status Link](#)

[Classified Section Link](#)

Important Dates / Deadlines

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