



Gaithersburg-Germantown Chamber of Commerce, Inc.

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HB612

Recovery for the Economy, Livelihoods, Industries, Entrepreneurs, and Families (RELIEF) Act SUPPORT

The Gaithersburg-Germantown Chamber of Commerce represents 430 businesses in Upper Montgomery County. We are working with our members every day to ensure that they can stay in business during the significant economic downturn we are experiencing as a result of the pandemic.

The Recovery for the Economy, Livelihoods, Industries, Entrepreneurs, and Families (RELIEF) Act is a critical lifeline to those who have significant need throughout the State.

- Direct stimulus payments will not only help individuals in need, it will put money back into the local economy.
- Repealing state and local income tax on unemployment benefits will greatly help those who have lost their jobs.
- Retail and restaurants have taken such a huge hit during the pandemic. The proposed sales tax credits will help more than 55,000 Maryland small businesses.

In addition to the direct aid to individuals and businesses, ensuring that employers are not penalized for covid-related layoffs is crucial. Providing unemployment tax relief for small businesses by ensuring that an employers 2021 tax rate is calculated based on their non-pandemic experience is very important for businesses to move forward. As the pandemic comes to an end, employers will need to invest in rebuilding their businesses and bringing back their employees. Being hit with rising unemployment tax rates would be a very unfortunate.

I know that balance the 2022 budget will be a very difficult task, as will replenishing our unemployment tax fund. However, the proposed RELIEF Act is a necessary compliment to prior aid packages and will go a long way to getting our economy strong again.

The Gaithersburg-Germantown Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests a **Favorable Report** on **HB612**.

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