



## **Senate Bill 204**

### *Property Tax - Deadline to Set County and Municipal Corporation Tax Rates - Alteration*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Ways and Means Committee

**WITH AMENDMENTS**

Date: March 18, 2025

From: Kevin Kinnally

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS SB 204 WITH AMENDMENTS**. This bill moves the deadline for counties and municipalities to set property tax rates from July 1 to June 1. Counties request practical amendments to accomplish the bill's central goals, but to hopefully minimize disruptions to local budget timelines and processes.

Counties depend on property tax revenue to fund critical services such as education, public safety, and infrastructure. The July 1 deadline ensures budgets incorporate late-breaking developments and provide adequate time for public input, thorough fiscal analysis, and sound decision-making. Shifting the deadline to June 1 would upend these processes, complicate budget planning, and necessitate updates to local charters or governing documents.

The State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT) requires finalized tax rates to calculate homeowners' tax credits and prepare county billing files, ensuring efficient and accurate tax administration. While MACo supports enhancing these processes, any administrative changes must preserve counties' ability to develop well-informed, community-driven budgets.

To address these concerns, MACo recommends a June 20 deadline as a sensible alternative that meets SDAT's administrative needs while maintaining counties' ability to conduct deliberate and informed budget planning. This approach allows sufficient time to prepare homeowners' tax credits and billing files without disrupting the local budget cycle.

Counties value timely and accurate tax administration. The proposed amendment achieves the objectives of SB 204 while properly safeguarding local budget processes. Accordingly, MACo urges the Committee to issue a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report on SB 204.