



TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL 280 -- VEHICLE LAWS - SUSPENSION OF DRIVER'S LICENSE OR REGISTRATION - UNPAID CITATIONS OR JUDGMENTS

February 19, 2020

**DONALD C. FRY
PRESIDENT & CEO
GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE**

Position: Support

The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) supports House Bill 280. This legislation modifies the circumstances under which the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) is authorized to suspend an individual's driver's license or registration, by removing certain provisions that allow for suspension for unpaid citations or judgments. The legislation authorizes the implementation of a payment plan structure, requires notification of the payment plan option, and also authorizes the state to pursue civil charges in court for nonpayment of the fines and fees that were previously subject to license or registration suspension.

The lack of safe, reliable, and affordable transportation options is a primary barrier for many residents of Maryland to obtain and maintain stable employment and also limits access to education, job training, and health care. The limitations of the current public transportation network, particularly in the Greater Baltimore region, necessitate that many must rely on auto travel to get to work and school, which can be extremely costly for those with modest incomes. The transportation barrier is further exacerbated by current state law which authorizes suspension of driver's license and registration for unpaid fines and fees.

The Baltimore Metropolitan Council released the [Barriers to Employment Opportunity in the Baltimore Region](#) report in December 2019. Transportation was identified as one of the primary barriers to employment in the report, which cited that "25 percent of job seekers reported issues with getting to work or home using public transportation" and more than 10 percent cited a bad driving record or lack of driver's license as a barrier. For those without a driver's license, more than two-thirds identified this as a major barrier.

Passage of House Bill 280 would bring Maryland into alignment with other states including Virginia which have repealed provisions to suspend driver's licenses for nonpayment of fines and fees to reduce the burden on lower income residents as they seek access to employment.

House Bill 280 is also consistent with the Greater Baltimore Committee's 2020 Legislative Priorities which encourage policymakers to support modifications to driver's license suspension policies to lessen barriers to workforce participation.

For these reasons, the Greater Baltimore Committee urges a favorable report on House Bill 280.

The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) is a non-partisan, independent, regional business advocacy organization comprised of hundreds of businesses -- large, medium and small -- educational institutions, nonprofit organizations and foundations located in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, and Howard counties as well as Baltimore City. The GBC is a 65-year-old, private-sector membership organization with a rich legacy of working with government to find solutions to problems that negatively affect our competitiveness and viability.

GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE

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