



# POSITION STATEMENT

## TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE SENATE JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS COMMITTEE

### SENATE BILL 402 – Driver's Licenses - Suspension for Child Support Arrearages - Repeal Sponsor: Senator Carter

February 9, 2021

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

#### **Position: Support**

The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) supports Senate Bill 402, which would end Maryland's practice of suspending an individual's driver's license if the licensed driver is delinquent in paying his or her child support. The current practice limits the ability of an impacted individual to maintain steady employment and pay child support.

Studies have found a robust correlation between a lack of legal authority to drive and unemployment/underemployment. The lack of a driver's license makes it difficult to find or keep a job. This is true even when a license is not actually needed to perform the job responsibilities, but is needed to get to the job site and some employers prefer applicants to have a valid driver's license as a proxy for reliability and responsibility. For example, a study of New Jersey drivers found that 42 percent of individuals whose licenses had been suspended lost their jobs within six months after the license suspension, and nearly half were unable to obtain new employment during the period of suspension. Research also shows that suspending driver's licenses for non-driving related violations disproportionately impacts low income and minority drivers.

The American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators recommended in 2013 that states repeal laws requiring suspensions for non-highway safety-related violations. In addition, in 2016 the U.S. Department of Justice outlined policy guidance related to enforcement of court fines and fees, encouraging state and local courts to "avoid suspending driver's licenses as a debt collection tool," and instead reserve it only for cases that would "increase public safety."

This bill directly aligns with the GBC's *2021 Legislative Priorities*, which call for the support of modifications to child support enforcement and driver's license suspension to lessen barriers to workforce participation.

**For these reasons, the Greater Baltimore Committee urges a favorable report on Senate Bill 402.**

*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 66-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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