



Senate Bill 520 -- *Property Tax - Charter Counties - Application of County Tax Limitation on Public Safety Budget*
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
February 24, 2026
Oppose

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (MCCC), the voice of business in Metro Maryland, opposes Senate Bill 520 -- *Property Tax - Charter Counties - Application of County Tax Limitation on Public Safety Budget*.

Senate Bill 520 allows the county council of a charter county to raise property tax rates or collect revenues above existing charter limits with only a simple majority vote when funding the county's approved public safety budget. Any property tax revenues collected above the charter-authorized amount, excluding those dedicated to a county board of education budget, must be directed entirely to the public safety budget.

While it is laudable to explore methods to enhance public safety funding, the Chamber opposes granting counties new authority to raise property taxes on residents and businesses. In Montgomery County, for example, the property tax rate was recently increased by 4.7 cents, making the county less affordable at a time when attainable housing is already in short supply.

Additionally, the Chamber is concerned that Senate Bill 520 undermines longstanding charter limitations designed to protect taxpayers by enabling county councils to raise property tax rates with only a simple majority. Expanding this authority weakens fiscal safeguards and exposes residents to unpredictable and potentially excessive tax increases. While supporting public safety is critically important, this bill achieves that by bypassing established charter constraints rather than encouraging responsible and sustainable budgeting.

For these reasons, the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce opposes Senate Bill 520 and respectfully requests an unfavorable report.

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (MCCC), on behalf of its members, champions the growth of business opportunities, strategic infrastructure investments, and a strong workforce to position Metro Maryland as a premier regional, national, and global business location. Established in 1959, MCCC is an independent, non-profit membership organization.

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