



House Bill 840

Position: Favorable

Committee: Ways and Means

Date: February 17, 2026

Founded in 1968, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce (“Maryland Chamber”) is a statewide coalition of more than 7,000 members working to develop and promote strong public policy that ensures sustained economic growth and opportunity for all Marylanders.

House Bill 840 (HB 840) provides counties, municipalities, and Baltimore City with the authority to establish a local property tax credit for commercial buildings rented to small businesses in designated Arts and Entertainment Districts. As a result, HB 840 encourages private investment while strengthening neighborhood business corridors.

Commercial property costs are one of the most significant barriers facing small businesses. Rising operating expenses and inflationary pressures are making it increasingly difficult for entrepreneurs to open or expand storefront operations. To address this issue, HB 840 offers a market-based incentive that rewards property owners who partner with small businesses and invest in long-term occupancy. **For these reasons, the Maryland Chamber respectfully requests a favorable report on HB 840.**