

## How can members help?

- Get involved in the West County Chamber Legislative Committee, helping us review and comment on legislation.
- Agree to serve as a subject matter expert as we testify during the General Session.
- Use the Maryland Chamber Action Network for in-depth information on issues and an easy method to contact your legislators:  
[www.chamberactionnetwork.com/](http://www.chamberactionnetwork.com/).
- Stay connected by reviewing the West County Chamber website and E-News for legislative updates and alerts: [www.westcountychamber.org](http://www.westcountychamber.org).
- Respond to action alerts by contacting your legislators by phone, letter, or email.
- Attend the 2012 Legislative Reception, Business Day in Annapolis, and other legislative events
- Educate your legislators at every opportunity on topics that affect your business—your stories are the best lobbying tools we have!

## Key Resources

The following websites are helpful for tracking information on the General Assembly during the session:

Maryland General Assembly:

[www.mlis.state.md.us](http://www.mlis.state.md.us)

*Bill summaries, hearing schedules, bill status, fiscal notes, committee lists, and much more.*

Maryland Chamber Network:

[www.chamberactionnetwork.com](http://www.chamberactionnetwork.com)

*Action alerts, bill summaries and position statements, blogs of recent news, and legislator lookup.*

*For an address list of local elected officials, contact the West County Chamber at 410-672-3422 or email [info@westcountychamber.org](mailto:info@westcountychamber.org). Not sure who represents you? Visit [www.chamberactionnetwork.com](http://www.chamberactionnetwork.com) for easy lookup by zip code for both your home and office locations.*

## Who are we?

The West County Chamber of Commerce represents almost 400 businesses in West Anne Arundel County. Our role is to monitor issues, educate our members, actively advocate for or against those issues that affect our area, and foster an open discussion between our elected representatives and area business owners.



The West County Chamber serves eleven communities including:

Annapolis Junction, Crownsville, Fort Meade, Gambrills, Hanover, Harmans, Jessup, Maryland City, Millersville, Odenton and Severn. However, our members come from throughout Anne Arundel county and neighboring jurisdictions, all sharing an interest in the growth of West Anne Arundel County.



**WEST ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

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**WEST ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**



*It's  
Happening  
Here!*

# 2012

# Legislative Priorities

**West Anne Arundel County—  
Gateway to Fort Meade**

## Transportation Trust Fund

Transportation funding is an investment in West County's economic development and quality of life. Maryland faces a \$40 billion shortfall over the next twenty years, and our area is already experiencing gridlock due to Fort Meade expansion and additional Cyber Command growth is on the way. We need to advocate for dedicated transportation funding that meets our local needs.

We will advocate for:

- **Adequate federal, state, and local funding** to make timely improvements to meet our transportation needs.
- Creation of a **Transportation Trust Fund firewall** to protect funds from being reallocated to the General Fund.
- Implementation of **creative mass-transit solutions** to relieve traffic in West County, to include full funding of the MARC train system improvements, transit-oriented development projects, Rideshare programs, and Central Maryland Regional Transit service in Anne Arundel County.

## Education

A well-educated workforce is an essential element of Maryland's economy, and our national reputation for funding our schools is excellent. Continued support of local programs is necessary to prepare our students to excel in the workplace.

We will advocate for:

- Allocation of funds to **educate a qualified workforce** to meet the needs of business, including forecasting and planning for future school facility needs and maintaining existing schools.
- **Expansion of STEM, International Baccalaureate (IB),** and other signature/magnet programs that prepare county students for the highly skilled jobs of the future.
- **Program expansion at Anne Arundel Community College** to provide an integrated path for county high school students graduating from these programs.

## Economic Development

BRAC is already here and we are entering the next stage of county development to include Cyber Command and new projects. A more effective partnership between the business community and regulators that enables local development projects to be processed quickly to capture opportunities is critical. Developers have many choices and we want to be identified as a welcoming place to do business.

We will advocate for:

- **A competitive, business-friendly climate** on both the local and state level, ensuring Anne Arundel County is attractive relative to our neighboring counties and Maryland relative to our neighboring states.
- **Expedited action on local development projects** in areas adjoining Fort Meade that can provide needed services to arriving personnel and contractors and tax revenues to Anne Arundel County.
- **Reasonable environmental regulations** that accommodate the need to protect our watershed without imposing excessive costs on new and existing development that support our tax base
- **Clarity and consistency of process and enforcement** of regulations by state and local agencies, providing a predictable environment in which businesses can operate .

## Workplace Regulation

One size does not fit all in workplace regulation. We need to balance the needs of employers and employees in enacting workplace-related laws.

We will advocate to:

- Preserve the **employer's right** to manage their workforces.
- Create **wage and benefit programs** that balance economic stresses with employee needs.
- Help ensure the fiscal soundness, benefit integrity, competitive position, and administrative effectiveness of Maryland's **Unemployment Insurance** programs.

## Taxation

Once again there will be pressure to raise tax revenues to meet our projected 2012 budget shortfall. We need a competitive business climate that encourages job growth, limits work regulation, and ensures a fair tax structure. Taxes and fees yield the same result: a burden on the business community.

We will:

- Oppose sales taxes on **business services** or gross receipts.
- Oppose corporate and **high earner tax rate** increases.
- Oppose laws that would authorize **local governments** to impose discriminatory levels of taxation on businesses.
- Support further reforms of **state pension and employee health insurance benefits** to relieve pressure for higher taxes.

## Affordable Health Insurance

We will support the implementation of the federal health care law in a manner that promotes competition and transparency, and allows employers to control health costs.

We will advocate to:

- Urge the **retention of a private health insurance market** operating in fair competition with a Health Insurance Exchange.
- Call for **limiting state health insurance benefit mandates** to the federally required essential health benefit package.

## Government Procurement

We are assisting local businesses in capturing government procurement opportunities through formation of a Government Contractors Guild in 2012.

We will advocate for:

- **Outreach at the county, state, and federal levels** to ensure that local businesses have ready access to information regarding local opportunities to do business with the government and prime contractors.