

Of the 2,605 bills introduced this year the MML Legislative Committee reviewed over 275 of them and in the end took active positions on 181 bills. In addition, MML staff responded to 343 fiscal note requests from the Department of Legislative Services. These numbers represent a significant increase over 2024. Special thanks to Chair Chris Nevin, Mayor of Hampstead, and Vice Chair Sara Green, Laurel City Clerk, for navigating this busy year with the dedicated group of 24 Legislative Committee members through countless hours of business over 13 committee meetings.

Green – MML supported, bill passed (11 bills)

Black – MML supported, bill did not pass (24 bills)

Red – MML opposed, bill did not pass (31 bills)

Blue – MML opposed, bill passed (5 bills)

Orange – MML supported with amendment, bill passed (10 bills)

Purple – MML supported with amendment, bill did not pass (15 bills)

Yellow – MML moved to no position after amendments, bill passed (3 bills)

Grey – MML moved to no position after amendments, bill did not pass (1 bill)

MML Priority Bills

HB 343/SB 390 - Motor Vehicles - Speed Monitoring Systems - Statements and Certificates of Violations. Authorizes local governments to use a technician to review speed camera images and issue citations. Requires technicians and law enforcement officers to complete reasonable training prior to first issuing citations.

HB 997/SB 324 - Admissions and Amusement Tax - Food and Beverages. Would allow local governments to apply a fee to on-site consumption of food & beverage products, up to 3%.

Budget/Finance

HB 300/SB 127 - State Government - Grants and Contracts - Reimbursement of Indirect Costs. Alters the required minimum reimbursement rate for indirect costs that nonprofits receive on State grants (including local passthroughs) to the greater of the *de minimis* rate established by OMB or 15%.

HB 350 / SB 319 - Budget Bill (Fiscal Year 2026). No significant cuts to municipal programs (highway user revenue, state aid for police protection, and program open space) and no significant cost shifts to municipalities.

HB 865/SB 564 - Catastrophic Event Account - Transfer of Funds - State Disaster Recovery Fund. Authorizing the transfer of funds from the Catastrophic Event Account to the State Disaster Recovery Fund if the balance of the Fund has been depleted due to use or transfer or the estimated costs for providing adequate disaster relief for a natural disaster or catastrophic situation are in excess of the Fund's balance.

Business Regulation

HB 132/SB 215 - Cannabis Reform – Revisions. Makes alterations to the operation of cannabis on-site consumption facilities and places a deadline for a local government to take action to alter the distances between dispensaries, and between dispensaries and certain sensitive properties.

HB 1354/SB 1021 - Business Regulation - Cemeteries - Requirements for Sale or Transfer or Government Acquisition. Would allow for government acquisition of certain cemeteries for the purpose of transferring ownership to a third-party entity.

HB 1412 - Business Regulation - Retail Stores - Carryout Bags. Would, under most circumstances, prohibit a local government from requiring a retail business to charge for a plastic bag at the point-of-sale.

HB 1377 - Cannabis - Advertising - Prohibited Locations (Equity in Cannabis Advertising Act). Would allow for the outdoor advertising of cannabis businesses.

Cybersecurity / IT

HB 82/SB 241 - Cyber Maryland Program – Revisions. Transferred the Cyber Maryland Program from the Maryland Technology Development Corporation to the Maryland Department of Labor. The legislation also revised the program's duties, adjusted the permissible uses of the fund, repealed certain funding requirements, and restructured the board's membership.

HB 1062/SB 871 - Department of the Environment - Community Water and Sewerage Systems - Cybersecurity Planning and Assessments. As amended, requires state agencies and community water and sewer system providers to improve cybersecurity planning and response efforts for the water and wastewater sector. It also amends the Public Information Act to exempt records related to the security of critical infrastructure and operational technology from public disclosure.

HB 1120/SB 497 - Department of Information Technology - Maryland OneStop - Required State, County, and Municipal Information. Required local jurisdictions to make all local licenses, forms, applications, permits, and related information available on the Maryland OneStop portal by July 1, 2026.

HB 1468/SB 867 - Cyber Maryland Program - Revisions. Transfers the Cyber Maryland Program from TEDCO to the Maryland Department of Labor. Also expands the program's

activities, authorizes new competitive grants, and adjusts funding and board composition, with the program slated for new discretionary appropriations starting in fiscal 2026.

Economic Development

HB 97/SB 409 - Economic Development - County or Municipal Corporation Economic Development Authority - Powers and Use of Proceeds. Would authorize a development authority to issue bonds in accordance with a local ordinance and expand the eligible uses of tax increment financing and bond proceeds.

HB 498/SB 427 - Economic Development - Delivering Economic Competitiveness and Advancing Development Efforts (DECADE) Act. Would have reorganized the economic development priorities and programs of the Department of Commerce.

HB 942 - Economic Development - Tax Increment Financing - Noncontiguous Areas. Would allow a local jurisdiction to identify noncontiguous blighted areas within their development district to utilize tax increment financing. As amended, the redevelopment would be limited to deed-restricted affordable housing.

Elections

HB 322/SB 88 - Election Law - Municipal Elections - Administration. Allows the State Board of Elections to enter MOUs with municipalities to lease voting equipment in support of municipal elections. It also shortens the request time to join the State ballot from 18 months to 9 months.

HB 680 - Municipal Elections - Voter Registration - List and Qualifications. Mandated that all municipalities require voter registration for their local elections and prohibits non-U.S. citizens from registering to vote in those elections.

HB 1043 - Maryland Voting Rights Act of 2025 - Voter Suppression and Vote Dilution. Enhanced public notice requirements for changes in election administration and establishes legal mechanisms for individuals or the Attorney General to challenge discriminatory election practices.

SB 342 - Voting Rights Act of 2025 - Counties and Municipal Corporations. Prohibited counties and municipalities from implementing election methods that dilute or abridge the voting power of protected classes, and allowed the Attorney General or affected individuals to bring legal action against jurisdictions that violate this provision.

Energy

HB 49/SB 256 - Environment - Building Energy Performance Standards - Alterations and Analysis. Includes new fees for compliance and reporting, sets up a waiver process, and requires the Department of the Environment to provide auditor training and certify local programs in certain cases.

HB 973/SB 804 - Maryland Building Performance Standards - Fossil Fuel Use, Energy Conservation, and Electric- and Solar-Ready Standards (Better Buildings Act of 2025). Required the Maryland Department of Labor to update the Maryland Building Performance

Standards by October 1, 2025. The bill mandated that new buildings and significant improvements meet all laundry, water, and space heating demands without using fossil fuels, and included provisions for electric- and solar-ready standards.

HB 1036/SB 931 - Public Utilities - Generating Stations - Generation and Siting (Renewable Energy Certainty Act). Streamlines the approval process for solar energy projects, including distributed generation systems between 2 and 5 megawatts, and limits local governments' authority to impose certain restrictions on such projects.

HB 1258 - Consumer Goods - Restrictions Based on Energy Source - Prohibition (Energy Equality Act of 2025). Aimed to prohibit local and state governments in Maryland from restricting the sale or use of consumer goods based solely on their energy source, effectively preempting local authority over energy-related regulations.

HB 1338 - Public Utilities - Certificates of Public Convenience and Necessity - Energy Storage Devices. Required energy storage devices to obtain a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) and mandated local government notification, did not make it out of the initial committee.

Environment

HB 131/SB 117 - Environment - Bay Restoration Fund - Septic System Upgrade Program. Enhances the Bay Restoration Fund by establishing performance-based funding levels for nitrogen removal technologies in septic systems and expanding funding eligibility to include repairs, replacements, and connections to municipal wastewater facilities.

HB 232/SB 346 - Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program. Would have created the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program, establishing a 10-cent refund for consumers who return eligible beverage containers.

HB 407 - Environment - Municipal Recycling Plans - Requirement. Would require the largest municipal corporations in each Maryland county to adopt or update recycling plans with specific waste reduction targets.

HB 909/SB 732 - Sewage Sludge Utilization Permits - Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances - Concentration Limits. Established maximum allowable concentrations of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in sewage sludge utilization permits issued by the Maryland Department of the Environment.

HB 1058 - Emission Standards, Ambient Air Quality Standards, and Solid Waste Management - Local Authority. Clarified that municipalities and other local governments retain the authority to adopt and enforce stricter emission standards, ambient air quality standards, and solid waste management requirements than those set by the state.

SB 901 - Environment - Packaging and Paper Products - Producer Responsibility Plans. Establishes a producer responsibility program that requires certain packaging and paper product

producers to join a Producer Responsibility Organization and submit a stewardship plan to the Maryland Department of the Environment.

Government Liability

HB 487/SB 484 - Unhoused Individuals - Rights, Civil Action, and Affirmative Defense. Established that unhoused individuals have the right to engage in "life-sustaining activities" in public places, prohibiting local governments from imposing penalties for exercising these rights, and authorized the Attorney General or affected individuals to bring civil actions against local governments for violations.

HB 1164 - Counties and Municipalities - Homelessness - Local Laws (Right to Rest Act). Prohibited counties and municipalities from enacting or enforcing local laws that prevent individuals from resting or sleeping in public spaces, protecting themselves from the elements in a manner that does not obstruct private property use, or sleeping in a legally parked vehicle.

HB 818 - Award of Attorney's Fees and Expenses - Violation of Maryland Constitutional Right. Authorized courts to award attorney's fees to a prevailing plaintiff in claims against local governments for alleged constitutional violations.

Government Operations

HB 74 - Legal Advertisement or Legal Notice - Publication in Newspaper or Newspaper in General Circulation - Digital Newspapers. As amended, local governments would have been required to publish public notices in print and digital formats.

HB 768/SB 546 - Municipal Incorporation - County Commissioners or County Council - Required Approval of Referendum Request. Would have required counties to hold a referendum for incorporation on any petition that receives signatures from 40% of the proposed population.

HB 806/SB 554 - Public Information Act - Frivolous, Vexatious, or Abusive Requests – Remedies. Would have allowed the Public Information Act Compliance Board to grant state agencies and local governments reprieve from abusive requests and future requests that follow a similar pattern.

HB 821/SB 555 - Public Information Act - Denials - Pending Litigation. Would allow a custodian to deny inspection of records created for the purposes of certain pending or reasonably anticipated litigation to which a governmental entity or an officer or employee of the entity is or may be a party

HB 1297 - Public Ethics - Local Government and School Boards - Requirements. Would have changed the standard for local ethics conflict of interest and lobbying provisions to "equivalent to or exceed the requirements" under the Maryland Public Ethics Law for State officials.

HB 1506/SB 820 - Municipalities - Enforcement of Ordinances and Resolutions. Increases the maximum fine a municipality can impose for enforcing certain ordinances and resolutions from \$1,000 to \$5,000.

- **SB 311 Government Officials' Family Protection Act of 2025**. Prohibited individuals from threatening to harm the immediate family members of state or local officials, deputy state's attorneys, assistant state's attorneys, or assistant public defenders.
- SB 593 Municipalities and Special Taxing Districts Annual Audit Waiver Threshold Increase. Raised the annual revenue threshold from \$250,000 to \$700,000, determining when the Legislative Auditor can adjust the frequency of required financial audits for certain municipalities or special taxing districts.
- SB 962 Municipalities Legislative Audit Exemption. Exempts a municipality with annual revenues below \$100,000 from annual audit requirements. An audit or review may still be required pending review of a local government's annual Uniform Financial Report.

Health

HB 729/SB 594 - Public Health - Use of Opioid Restitution Fund and Training Under the Overdose Response Program. Aligns the eligible uses of funds from opioid settlements with those articulated in the settlements.

Housing/Land Use

HB 80/SB 190 - Land Use - Transit-Oriented Development - Alterations. Aimed to promote transit-oriented development by limiting local control over zoning and development within 0.25 miles of rail transit stations.

HB 90/SB 235 - Housing and Community Development - Project Restore Program – Establishment. Established the Project Restore Program within the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to support businesses and organizations that contribute to economic development or historic preservation in local business districts

HB 503/SB 430 - Housing Development Act. Required the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and the Department of Planning to calculate regional housing infrastructure gaps based on jobs-to-housing ratios. Local jurisdictions with a ratio greater than 1.5 were obligated to expeditiously approve housing development applications, with limited justifications for denial.

- HB 626 Real Estate Development and Highway Rights-of-Way Installation of Broadband Micro Conduits and Microducts. Would require conduit installed in a right-of-way to include seven microducts.
- **HB** 705 **Real Property Short-Term Rentals**. Prohibited counties and municipalities from enacting local laws or ordinances that prevent lessees or sublessees from offering residential properties as short-term rentals.
- **HB** 751 Municipalities Annexed Land Land Use and Density. Would have allowed municipalities to develop recently annexed land in line with the comprehensive plan of the county or municipality without the need for express approval.

- HB 760 Counties and Municipalities Approval of Projects Denied by Maryland Historical Trust Authorization. Authorized county and municipal governing bodies to approve projects previously denied by the Maryland Historical Trust under certain conditions.
- **HB 1128 Land Bank Authorities Powers and Authority**. Permitted local governments to authorize land banks to pursue in rem foreclosures on vacant, uninhabitable properties with tax liens exceeding their value.
- HB 1193/SB 944 Housing Development Permits Local Reporting Requirements (Maryland Housing Data Transparency Act). Requires certain counties to report information about housing development permits to the Department of Planning. Municipalities may elect to report.
- HB 1444 Local Government Moderate Income Housing Unit Requirements Prohibition Against Fee-in-Lieu. Prohibited counties and municipalities from allowing developers to pay a fee-in-lieu instead of providing moderate-income housing units in new residential developments.
- HB 1466/SB 891 Land Use and Real Property Accessory Dwelling Units Requirements and Prohibitions. Creates a state policy to support the development of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) on properties with a single-family home as the primary residence to address housing needs. It also mandates local laws to allow ADUs and prohibits unreasonable restrictions that limit an owner's ability to build or rent an ADU.
- **HB** 1525 Municipalities Annexation Limitations. Would prohibit municipalities from annexing land across legislative district boundaries.
- **SB** 666 Maryland Community Action Agencies Funding. Mandates a \$250,000 appropriation in the annual state budget as grants to community action agencies statewide to support measures aimed at combating poverty from fiscal years 2027-2030.

Personnel

- HB 102/SB 225 Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program Revisions. Delays provisions of the FAMLI program by 18 months; specifically, the start of contributions to the Fund to January 1, 2027 and the start of benefits to a date determined by the Department between January 1, 2027 and January 3, 2028. Also, local governments are not required to escrow any contributions prior to the start of benefits.
- HB 176/SB 26 Davis Martinez Public Employee Safety and Health Act. Requires public bodies to make certain documents pertaining to workplace safety available to employees, establishes a new unit within the Department of Labor, and creates a process for the development of regulations for correctional officer body worn cameras.
- HB 321/SB 303 Pharmacy Benefits Managers Definition of Purchaser and Alteration of Application of Law. Would alter the definition of "purchaser" as it pertains to pharmacy benefit managers and establish a workgroup to study the issue.

HB 990/SB 35 - Municipal Appointees and Employees - Financial Oversight - Required Education and Experience. Would require municipal treasurers to have substantial and specific amounts of educational and work experience.

HB 1080/SB 652 - Local Government - Local Personnel - Leave With Pay. Authorizes local governments to grant leave with pay to certain employees for certain disaster-related response purposes.

HB 1105/SB 770 - Public Schools and Youth Services - Crisis Support and Assistance and Workgroup Study. Would establish a workgroup to study the hiring practices of public bodies for positions that interact directly with children.

HB 1413 - Labor and Employment - Employer Communications During Nonworking Hours - Right to Disconnect. Would require an employer to establish a policy that allows employees to ignore communications from the employer during nonworking hours, subject to some exceptions.

HB 1443/SB 872 - Local Government - Hiring and Promotion Preferences for Veterans and Spouses of Service Members and Veterans (Families Serve Act). Authorizes local governments to institute certain hiring preferences for veterans and their spouses.

HB 1509/SB 976 - Collective Bargaining - Local Government Employees and Public Employee Relations Act. Would allow all local government employees to organize and collectively bargain. Binding arbitration would be mandatory if negotiations stall.

SB 306 - Workers' Compensation - Prescription Drug and Pharmaceutical Services – Reimbursements. Would require the Commission to set reimbursement rates based on an index of indices.

Public Safety

HB 139 - Public Safety - Police Accountability - Deadline for Completion of Investigation. Required law enforcement agencies to complete investigations into public complaints of police misconduct and submit their findings to the administrative charging committee within nine months of receiving the complaint.

HB 172/SB 188 - Community Health and Safety Works Grant Program and Fund – Alterations. Updated the Community Health and Safety Works Grant Program by expanding eligible projects and applicants, removing limits on grant amounts, and allowing the grant fund to be used for administrative and operating costs of the Department of Housing and Community Development.

HB 238/SB 533 - Public Safety - Police Accountability - Time Limit for Filing Administrative Charges. Sets a one-year-and-one-day deadline for completing the administrative review process or filing charges in police discipline cases, starting from when the department becomes aware of the incident. If the misconduct may involve a criminal case, the deadline is extended to one year and one day after the criminal matter is resolved or dismissed.

- HB 635/SB 292 Motor Vehicles Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence. Would have made certain vehicle offenses, such as expired registration or driving in a bus lane, enforceable only as secondary offenses
- HB 669 Law Enforcement Officers Body-Worn Cameras Requirements. Required all Maryland law enforcement agencies to equip officers with body-worn cameras by July 1, 2027, and sets standards for their use, including when recordings can be used, redacted, or denied for public inspection.
- HB 748 Municipalities Enforcement Officers Body-Worn Cameras. Authorized municipalities to allow enforcement officers to use body-worn cameras while performing their duties, in alignment with the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission's guidelines.
- HB 885/SB 625 Public Safety Police Accountability Investigation Records Relating to Unfounded and Exonerated Complaints. Required the removal of all "investigation records" relating to a complaint of misconduct from a police officer's personnel record three years after an administrative charging committee or trial board issues a finding that the complaint is unfounded or exonerated.

Tax

- HB 59/SB 192 Property Tax Tax Sales Revisions. Alters the tax sale process to better protect owner-occupied properties from tax sale.
- **HB** 168 Manufacturing Business Personal Property Tax Exemption. Would exempt all personal property in the possession of a person engaged in a manufacturing business that is a small-or medium-sized enterprise from personal property tax.
- **SB** 488 Manufacturing Business Personal Property Tax Optional Exemption. Allows local governments to exempt all personal property, including manufacturing inventory, in the possession of a person engaged in a manufacturing business that employs 50 or fewer employees from the personal property tax
- HB 390/SB 327 Affordable Housing Payment In Lieu of Taxes Expansion Act. Authorizes county governments to exempt real property used for rental housing from the county property tax if the property owner maintains at least 25% of the rental housing units as affordable dwelling units and enters into a payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) agreement with the county government.
- HB 87/SB 132 Short-Term Rentals and Home Amenity Rentals Taxation, Regulation, and Crimes. Extended the local hotel rental tax to short-term rentals by redefining "hotel" to include short-term rental platforms and units. It also applied specific health and safety standards to these rentals, prohibited certain activities on-site, and gave local governments the authority to adopt related rules and regulations.
- HB 101/SB 204 Property Tax Deadline to Set County and Municipal Corporation Tax Rates Alteration. Changes the deadline by which local governments are required to set their property tax rates from July 1 to June 20.

- HB 330/SB 472 Property Tax Property Adjacent to Rail Stations Subclasses and Special Rates. Would have authorized local jurisdictions to apply different property tax rates to the land and structures within a 1-mile radius of a rail station. It also required local governments to send 5% of any revenue from this setup to the State Transporation Trust Fund.
- HB 726 Homestead Property Tax Credit Eligible Properties Alteration. Would expand eligibility for the homestead property tax credit to include additional residences.
- HB 907 Property Tax Credit Urban Agricultural Property Alterations. Would have expanded the definition of "urban agricultural property" for the purposes of an optional local tax credit.
- HB 910/SB 911 Property Tax Exemption for Blind Individuals Alteration. Alters the property tax exemption for dwelling houses owned by blind individuals or their surviving spouses from \$15,000 to \$40,000.
- **HB** 1103/SB 979 Local Government Accommodations Intermediaries Hotel Rental Tax Collection by Comptroller and Alterations. Ensures that 3rd party listing sites (like Booking.com) collect and remit local hotel tax on short-term rentals through the Comptroller in line with the Wayfair decision. It also prohibits local governments from applying a different rate for short-term rental than other types of accommodations.
- HB 1214 Property Tax Homestead Property Tax Credit First-Time Homebuyer. Would have established the taxable assessment to be used for the calculation of the homestead property tax credit for first-time homebuyers in the State.
- HB 1508/SB 1037 Baltimore City Sales Tax Authorization. Would allow the City of Baltimore to establish a 2% local sales tax.
- **SB 822 Property Tax Tax Credit for Nonprimary Residence**. Would have established a mandatory tax credit against nonprimary residents (second homes/vacation homes).

Transportation

- HB 20/SB 198 Transportation Consolidated Transportation Program Prioritization (Transportation Investment Priorities Act of 2025). Would make significant changes to the CTP process and method to evaluate transportation projects.
- HB 182/SB 118 Motor Vehicles Speed Monitoring Systems Penalties. Allows a jurisdiction that operates speed cameras to establish a tiered fine system whereby the fines increase as the vehicle speed over the speed limit increases. A workgroup to study speed cameras is also established.
- HB 348/SB 520 Motor Vehicles Speed Monitoring Systems Safety Corridors. Would allow SHA to place speed cameras on State-owned roads within defined safety corridors.
- HB 637 Transportation Highway User Revenues Capital Grants Calculation. Would increase the apportionment percentage of HUR to local governments.

HB 644/SB 530 - Vehicle Laws - Speed Monitoring Systems - Residential Districts. Would authorize local governments Statewide to place speed cameras in residential zones.

HB 860 - Public Nuisance - Common Carriers - Damage to Public Infrastructure. Authorizes local governments to seek certain types of relief and monetary damages for an incident where public infrastructure is damaged by a common carrier.

HB 915 - Motor Vehicles - Out-of-State Drivers - Automated Enforcement (Out-of-State Driver Accountability Act). Would require jurisdictions that operate speed cameras to report on the number of violations credited to out-of-state drivers.

HB 1039/SB 913 - Department of Agriculture - Public Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment - Registration, Regulation, and Oversight. Would require registration and fees paid for each publicly accessible EV charging station.

HB 1360 - Environment - Road Salt - Outdoor Storage. Would prohibit uncovered outdoor storage of road salt and mandate that the Department publish regulations on covered outdoor storage.

HB 1370/SB 881 - Transportation - Regional Transportation Authorities. Would establish regional transportation authorities with mechanisms to raise revenue for regional transportation projects and disbursement to local governments for local projects.

HB 1405 - Commercial Law - Vehicles Towed or Removed From Parking Lots - Statutory Liens and Administrative Hearings. Would require a local government to establish an administrative hearing process to for a vehicle owner to challenge the towing of their vehicle.

SB 935 - Transportation - Regional Authorities - Established. Would establish regional transportation authorities with mechanisms to raise revenue for regional transportation projects but without disbursement to local governments for local projects.

About Us

The Maryland Municipal Leage (MML) uses its collective voice to advocate, empower, and protect the interests of our 161 local government members and elevates local leadership, delivers impactful solutions, and builds an inclusive culture for the 2 million Marylanders we serve.

Meet the Team

Theresa Kuhns, CEO

Portfolio: League priority legislation; Administration and executive leadership management

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