

**AGENDA
PPC MEETING
SEPTEMBER 8, 2020
TELECONFERENCE**

- BALTIMORE CITY
 - For Discussion and Consideration
 - Substantial changes in Citywide and Council District office holders will occur as a result of the June 2, 2020 Primary election. There will be three new Citywide Officials (Mayor, City Council President, Comptroller) and five (out of fourteen) new Council members. What roles/actions may be appropriate for the Chamber in this election cycle?
 - On July 16, 2020, the Chamber sponsored a webinar on Baltimore’s Aerial Surveillance Program. The webinar, presented by Persistent Surveillance Systems (PSS), was recorded and is available to interested parties. How may the Chamber make the best use of the webinar recording?
 - A significant concern of small business is the potential liability of staying open or reopening during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, employees that become ill with the disease after returning to work could sue their employers claiming they were forced to return to work too early, they were not given adequate protections in their working environment, the employers did not adhere to required CDC guidelines, and so forth. Legislation protecting business from such claims—unless the employer actions were egregious—has been considered elsewhere. Will this become an issue in Baltimore?
 - Council Bill 20-0488 – Construction Projects—Project Labor Agreements
 - This Bill would require, for large construction projects, that a collective bargaining agreement be established between the contractor and “a labor organization.” The Bill would apply to all subcontractors on the project and may have an adverse on small and minority companies unable to meet, for example, the pay scale established in the agreement. *The Bill is in the Labor Committee.*
 - Council Bill 20-526 – Baltimore City COVID-19 Renter Relief Act
 - This Bill prohibits increasing rents and assessing late fees during Governor-declared periods of emergency and for 90 days after its expiration. *The Bill has been signed by the Mayor and is enacted (Ordinance 20.364).* Concern, however, has been raised about the post 90-day potential effect of the Bill.
 - Council Bill 20-535 – COVID-19 Relief – Premium Pay for Essential Workers
 - Essential employers of 100 employees or more will be required to pay its employees a premium of between \$10 and \$25 per shift, depending upon the length of the shift. *The Bill is in the Labor Committee.*
 - Council Bill 20-543 – COVID-19 Employee Retention
 - This Bill would require certain new (successor) business employers (such as hotels and commercial property employers) to retain certain employees designated by the incumbent employer. *This Bill is in the Labor Committee.*
 - Council Bill 20-544 – COVID-19 Laid-Off Employees Right of Recall
 - This Bill would require employers to recall certain employees who have been laid off after the imposition of the COVID-19 state of emergency. *This Bill is in the Labor Committee.*

- MARYLAND –The Governor has said that he is loath to raise taxes or increase spending due to the economic and financial effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - SB987/HB1056—Racing and Community Development Act of 2020
 - This Bill authorizes the Maryland Stadium Authority to issue bonds to fund the rehabilitation of Pimlico and ensure that the Preakness remains in Baltimore. *Has become law without Governor’s signature.*
 - HB 732 –Tobacco Tax, Sales and Use Tax, and Digital Advertising Gross Revenues Tax
 - The Digital Advertising Tax was added to this Bill as the General Assembly rushed to early adjournment due to COVID-19. The purpose of the tax is to generate revenue required to support Kirwan (see HB 1300 below.) The sponsors of HB 732 argue that the tax will affect only large social media companies (Facebook, Amazon, Google, etc.); however, the Bill is opposed on economic impact, legal, and constitutional grounds. Advertising and media companies are urging Gov. Hogan to veto it. *Vetoed; subject to override.*
 - HB 1354—Sales and Use Tax and Personal Property Tax – Services, Aircraft Parts and Equipment, and Data Centers
 - This Bill would place a tax on selected services including cell phone services, telephone answering services, credit reporting, pay per view television services, and various construction and commercial cleaning services. Earlier attempts on taxing services have been defeated (HB 1628) or had strong opposition. *Passed both Chambers; in conference.*
 - HB 1300—Blueprint for Maryland’s Future – Implementation
 - Commonly known as the “Kirwin Bill,” this legislation establishes the infrastructure for implementing the Kirwan Commission plan for school improvement, but does not include funding. *Vetoed; subject to override.*
 - HB695/SB002—Digital Advertising Gross Revenues - Taxation
 - This Bill is currently in the House Ways and Means Committee. It is an instance of other attempts to place taxes on services.

Adjournment

Next Meeting: October 13, 2020