



POSITION STATEMENT

**TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE
SENATE BILL 210 – TAX CREDITS – EMPLOYER-PROVIDED COMMUTER BENEFITS -
EXPANSION**

Departmental - Transportation

March 23, 2022

**DONALD C. FRY
PRESIDENT & CEO
GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE**

Position: Support

Senate Bill 210 would expand the available commuter benefits that an employer is able to claim as a business tax credit. The bill adds carpooling as a form of rideshare, as well as adding telework, active transportation, and multimodal options for first and last mile benefits.

The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) supports Senate Bill 210 because the addition of these employer provided commuter benefit options will allow an employer to customize a transportation solution for the specific circumstances of its employees and location. This will allow businesses to help employees overcome one of the greatest barriers to employment, reliable transportation. It will also help to reduce congestion, conserve energy, protect the environment, and improve the quality of life of all Marylanders. Combined, these factors will help continue to make Maryland a more competitive state for business.

As amended, the bill sets a cap of \$1 million for the total amount of tax certificates that can be issued by the Department of Transportation. Up to this point, total tax credits have not exceeded that level. The GBC would ask the General Assembly to monitor the increased use of the credit, and consider eliminating or raising the cap in the future if the tax credit becomes fully subscribed.

This bill is consistent with two key tenets in *Gaining the Competitive Edge: Keys to Economic Growth and Job Creation in Maryland*, a report published by the GBC that identifies eight core pillars for a competitive business environment and job growth:

Government leadership that unites with business as a partner. Maryland leaders must set a welcoming tone that communicates positive support for business, respect for the private sector as a partner, not an adversary, and reflects a strategic plan for business growth and job creation.

Strategic and effective state investments in business growth. The state must commit to substantive strategic investments, leveraged with capital assets, to nurture business and job growth. Investments should include competitive and effective tax credits, business development incentives, and tactical initiatives to nurture private investment in industry growth.

Currently, congestion levels have not returned to pre-COVID-19 volumes, partly due to fewer commuters as many employers have continued to offer flexible work schedules. The GBC contends that this bill will support Maryland businesses by enabling them to provide more flexible commuter benefits and maintain the continued reduction in congestion levels, benefiting all Marylanders with safer roads and less pollution.

For these reasons, the Greater Baltimore Committee urges a favorable report on Senate Bill 210.

The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) is a non-partisan, independent, regional business advocacy organization comprised of hundreds of businesses -- large, medium and small -- educational institutions, nonprofit organizations and foundations located in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, and Howard counties as well as Baltimore City. The GBC is a 67-year-old, private-sector membership organization with a rich legacy of working with government to find solutions to problems that negatively affect our competitiveness and viability.

GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE

111 South Calvert Street • Suite 1700 • Baltimore, Maryland • 21202-6180

(410) 727-2820 • www.gbc.org