

ALOC NEWS

www.cumberlandlandlords.com

April 10, 2007

Associated Landlords of the Cumberland Area
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Vol. 13, Issue 4

Maryland General Assembly Ends!

The 2007 Maryland General Assembly session concluded last night. Below is a brief recap for your review.

Taxes and the Budget: There were no new major tax increases enacted this session, and little was done to address Maryland's projected \$1.5 billion budget deficit.

Numerous funding proposals were considered, but they appeared to be scattershot. Lawmakers introduced bills to increase the sales tax, income tax, gas tax and cigarette tax, as well as legislation to expand the sales tax to many professional services.

The Maryland Chamber of Commerce urged lawmakers to consider the big picture and potential unintended consequences of this patchwork approach to a wide variety of tax changes. The Chamber recommended lawmakers conduct a comprehensive analysis of Maryland's tax structure and use private sector experts – like economists, accountants and other professionals – to ensure it gains an accurate picture of the economic impact of proposed changes to the State's tax structure.

According to newspaper accounts, Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller would like to see lawmakers address the deficit during a special session this fall. Others want to wait until next session. Miller predicted that the solution would comprise a combination of budget cuts, a gas tax increase, sales tax increase, sales tax expansion to services, and the authorization of slots.

Slots: The General Assembly failed to act on legislation to authorize slot machines in Maryland to help provide the funding needed for the 2002 Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act, school construction, scholarships, and racing purses.

Civil Liability: A number of bills that would have had a negative impact on Maryland's business community, including were defeated including:

- Legislation that would have adopted a system of comparative fault, allowing a person to recover damages for an injury even if they contributed to their own injury.

- Legislation that would have imposed an unprecedented standard of liability for companies that previously sold lead paint based on their market share of sales.

Health: Small steps were taken to improve access to health care by authorizing discounts for small employers that participate in wellness programs, providing greater flexibility to health insurance carriers in the types of health insurance products that they offer, and requesting a study of requiring higher income individuals to maintain health insurance. Unlike prior years, the General Assembly did not attempt to enact employer health care mandates. Legislation was also killed that would have authorized Canadian drug imports and disclosed employer names for businesses with more than 25 employees receiving state health benefits.

Transportation Funding: There were a number of transportation funding bills considered by the General Assembly. The bills proposed major changes to Maryland's tax structure while increasing funds into the Transportation Trust Fund (TTF). The Maryland Chamber offered strong support for finding new funding sources to increase the balance in the TTF. However, no one legislative proposal offered the ultimate solution.

The Maryland Chamber believes the State Maryland must find new sources of revenue to address the State's transportation needs. Given the State's projected \$1.5 billion budget deficit, this task must be accomplished through a comprehensive analysis of all the State's needs for the General Fund and the TTF.

This is a very short version of the Maryland Chamber of Commerce Report!

(Thanks to the Maryland Chamber of Commerce for this information!!!)

City Housing Code Update

The new City Code is slowly working its way through the administrative process at City Hall and it should soon show up for voting by the Mayor and Council. I will have more details to report later, however the one key change in the new code is the transition to self inspection using approved forms. One of the biggest complaints I here from Landlords is the hassle involved with arranging a Lead Inspection and then a City Inspection.

National Tenant Network

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Visual Inspections and Dust Wipes

201 Massachusetts Ave.

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Property Owners Association of Maryland, Inc. (POAM) and etc.

As the session started to wind down over the past week or so our PAOMD lobbyist Bob Enten was hard at work trying to craft a compromise regarding the Lead Omnibus Bill HB 1020. Alfred Singer and Bob Enten met with members of the Houses Environmental Matters Committee and members of the Lead Paint Gang to work out these compromises and they were favorably voted on by the committee which was then approved by the House.

The Bill then ended up in the Senate and it appeared that it would be treated favorably but at the last minute the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee voted down all Lead paint Bills! Nothing ended up being voted on in the Senate and the Lead Paint Gang got absolutely nothing out of the Legislature this year! Wow what a pleasant surprise.

While we can't claim that we personally shot these Bills down in flames, certainly we did a good job of pointing out the shortcoming and fallacies associated with HB 1020 when we testified back in March at the hearings. Fortunately for us we have a reasonably even handed group with the Environmental Matters Committee.

The PAOMD will prepare a more in depth report which we will receive in May or June once the Governor has signed off on the new bills. We are currently looking at meeting in Annapolis in June to conclude our business and prepare for next year. One thing for certain we will see many of these bills again and with the new Governor broken in we may all be surprised by the bills that may be introduced.

Leases and other Documents

ALOC has available leases, rental applications and tenant checklists for sale, at cost, to members. The cost for each item is as follows: Large print regular or HUD Lease @ \$ 1.70 - Rental Application @ \$ 0.50 - Move in Checklist @ \$ 0.50 Lead Paint Brochures, both EPA & Maryland and document receipt@ \$3.50 for the set - Document Receipt for MDE & EPA brochures (disclosure) @ \$ 0.25

These forms are kept at Jeff Hutter's office, TWR Comm. at 549 N. Centre Street. Any paid member can stop by and pick up whatever they need. If you need more than 5 of each item please call at least 24 hours in advance so that we can make sure we have plenty on hand. Call 777-2692 ext 115 Monday through Friday and you can talk to Pam, Kathy or Gary.

TWR has limited Saturday hours from 9am-1pm most Saturdays (closed some Holiday weekends)

Please note: We do not keep MDE or City Housing registration forms on hand.

Thought for the month

The nation will find it very hard to look up to the leaders who are keeping their ears to the ground.

Sir Winston S. Churchill

DUES TIME

If you find a dues notice attached you will need to pay your dues for 2007 as soon as possible!
Members having any questions about their dues can call Jeff Hutter at 301-777-0379 evenings and weekends.

Meeting Schedule

May 14, 2007 J. Je

September 10, 2007

November 12, 2007

February 11, 2008

Meetings are held at the
South Cumberland Library
on Race and Seymour St.
at 6:30 PM

ALOC Officers

Jeffrey Hutter President

Carey Walker V. President

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TWR Communications 301-777-2692 9-30-07

TWR supplies quality high speed Internet Access, both dialup and Wireless in the Tri-state area. TWR provides other computer services including training, computer repairs, networking and website hosting. If you have need of storage space check out our self-storage facilities on Necessity St.

TWR is an agent for Cellular One, operates a wide area network with wide area paging and mobile 2-way radio. Check us out at twr@hereintown.net

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