



TO: COLUMBIA ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FROM: MICHAEL ANITON, GENERAL COUNSEL
RE: 2022 LEGISLATIVE SESSION – PRE-FILED STATE LEGISLATION
AND CURRENT HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL LEGISLATION
DATE: DECEMBER 2, 2021

The deadline for pre-filing bills in the Maryland General Assembly was November 20, 2021, and at this time there are no new bills of concern. The 2022 Session convenes on January 12, 2022.

A. Bill Descriptions

There are no new bills on which to report at this time.

B. Status Updates

HOWARD COUNTY DELEGATION PROPOSED BILL

Ho.Co. 10-22 – Howard County – Property Tax – Credit for Seniors to Offset Property Tax Rate Increase

This bill would authorize Howard County to grant a property tax credit against the county property tax imposed on dwellings owned by senior citizen homeowners who also meet certain income and residency requirements. We are still evaluating the potential impact to CA, and CA's lobbyist, Paul Tiburzi, will continue to monitor the bill as it proceeds through the legislative process.

HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL BILLS

CB64-2021, CB78-2021, CB79-2021, and CB89-2021

All of these bills relate to specimen trees and/or various provisions of the Forest Conservation Act.

- **CB64-2021** – This bill would prohibit the clearing of specimen trees unless they are dead, diseased, or invasive. It would also set up a process that requires certain property owners, including CA, to apply for a notification to proceed before the removal of a dead, diseased, or invasive specimen tree. We are working with the County Council and County Administration to ensure that the bill still allows for best practice management of CA holdings, and will continue to advocate to protect CA interests as well as achieve the bill's intended environmental protections. Discussion around amendments continues among the interested parties. This bill was tabled at the 11/1/2021 Council meeting, and that status has not changed.
- **CB78-2021** – This bill would add new definitions to the Forest Conservation ordinance, and establish a "look-back" provision for the disturbance of certain trees, reducing the diameter

threshold to 24 inches for forest retention. We are continuing to monitor this bill, which was tabled at the 11/1/2021 Council meeting. That status has not changed.

- **CB79-2021** – This bill provides for enhanced enforcement measures and penalties for violations of the Forest Conservation Act. We are continuing to monitor this bill, which was tabled at the 11/1/2021 Council meeting. That status has not changed.
- **CB89-2021** – This bill would add new definitions to the Forest Conservation ordinance, and establish a “look-back” provision for the disturbance of certain trees. It appears that this bill would not impact current CA operations. This bill will be considered by the Council at its 12/6/2021 meeting.

CB82-2021 – Howard County Minimum Wage

This bill would establish a local minimum wage of \$16 per hour for employees working in Howard County. The current minimum wage would be increased in phases, the timing of which would depend on the size of the employer as defined in the bill. The Howard County Chamber of Commerce has already expressed its opposition to this bill. We are monitoring this bill, which will be considered by the Council at its 12/6/2021 meeting.

CB88-2021 – Maintenance/Repair of Historic Structures

This bill would prohibit the willful failure to do specified maintenance and repair of certain historic structures, in order to avoid demolition by neglect of those structures, and would also allow the Historic District Commission to waive compliance in certain cases of financial hardship and provide for a hearing and an opportunity to cure specified violations. CA owns several historic structures, so we will continue to monitor this bill. This bill will be considered by the Council at its 12/6/2021 meeting.

C. Hearing Chart

Hearing Date – Time	Bill Number	Title	Cross-filed Bill
11/16 – 7:30 p.m.	HoCo 10-22	Howard County – Property Tax – Credit for Seniors to Offset Property Tax Rate Increase, Ho. Co. 10-22	---
9/20 – 7:00 p.m.	CB64-2021	Howard County Council – Specimen Trees	---
9/20 – 7:00 a.m.	CB66-2021	Howard County Council – Forest Conservation Act removal of exemptions	---
10/18 – 7:00 p.m.	CB78-2021	Howard County Council – Forest Conservation Act tree “lookback”provision	---
10/18 – 7:00 p.m.	CB79-2021	Howard County Council – Forest Conservation Act enforcement measures	---
11/15 – 7:00 p.m. 11/17 – 6:00 p.m.	CB82-2021	Howard County Council – Local Minimum Wage	---
11/15 – 7:00 p.m.	CB88-2021	Howard County Council – Historic Structure Maintenance	---
11/15 – 7:00 p.m.	CB89-2021	Howard County Council – Forest Conservation Act tree “lookback”provision	---