

*Text from MCCC President and CEO Georgette "Gigi" Godwin letter dated March 11, 2014 to House Delegates voting "Yes" on HB 739:*

"On behalf of our Board of Directors and members, thank you for your 'yes' vote on House Bill 739 – Maryland Estate Tax – Unified Credit. As reflected in the MCCC 2014 Legislative Agenda, we support the package of bills introduced by the General Assembly leadership that promote economic development and a robust business climate.

As you clearly recognize, we need to keep our middle class taxpayers in Maryland to help fund the many programs that make Maryland a great state. Therefore, we must enact policies that make Maryland an attractive place for individuals to build their lives and leave their legacies. The current estate tax policy imposes a higher rate of taxation on lower-valued estates than surrounding jurisdictions and most other states in the country, thereby creating a disincentive for individuals to stay in Maryland as they enter retirement and focus on estate planning.

Many residents of Montgomery County, your constituents, fall into this category. These are our neighbors - small business owners and entrepreneurs, teachers and government employees - who are homeowners and long time, if not lifetime, residents. They have worked hard and prudently saved to have a comfortable retirement. Clark Kendall, a member of our Board of Directors, wrote in "The Washington Business Journal" a 65-year-old couple has a joint life expectancy of twenty-six years. Under the current policy, the State of Maryland stands to lose - on average - two and a half decades of taxing retirees' pension income, IRA distributions, consulting income, sales tax, property taxes, gas taxes, users taxes, etc. if that couple moves away in their 60's. The opportunity costs of an outward migration outweigh the revenue generated by the current Maryland estate tax.

Instead, Maryland needs an estate tax that is recoupled with the federal limits to achieve the goals of a sound estate tax policy while improving Maryland's competitive position. We applaud your vote in support of this legislation and look forward to sharing your position with our members at our meetings and through our weekly Advocacy Highlights email blast.

Thank you for your continued good work and we look forward to seeing you soon."

*Text from MCCC President and CEO Georgette "Gigi" Godwin letter to House Delegates voting No on HB 739:*

"As reflected in the MCCC 2014 Legislative Agenda, we support the package of bills introduced by the General Assembly leadership that promote economic development and a robust business climate. I am writing on behalf of our Board of Directors and membership to express our disappointment in your vote on House Bill 739 – Maryland Estate Tax – Unified Credit.

We need to keep our middle class taxpayers in Maryland to help fund the many programs that make Maryland a great state. Therefore, we must enact policies that make Maryland an attractive place for individuals to build their lives and leave their legacies. The current estate tax policy imposes a higher rate of taxation on lower-valued estates than surrounding jurisdictions and most other states in the country, thereby creating a disincentive for individuals to stay in Maryland as they enter retirement and focus on estate planning.

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Instead, Maryland needs an estate tax that is recoupled with the federal limits to achieve the goals of a sound estate tax policy while improving Maryland's competitive position. Since this is a priority issue, we will be sharing the final vote with our members at our meetings and through our weekly Advocacy Highlights email blast.

We appreciate our constructive partnership with you on so many issues of importance to our small business entrepreneurs and to our next generation of talent. For this reason, we welcome the opportunity to discuss further your position on this and other matters of importance to this Chamber.

Thank you for your continued service and we look forward to meeting with you."