



September 8, 2020

Statement from MACo's President Regarding the 2020 Winter Conference:

Dear MACo Members,

I last wrote to you in May with the unfortunate news that MACo's Summer Conference had to be cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I don't think any of us could have predicted in May that we would be facing a round two of that announcement in September. However, here we are again: it is with a heavy heart that I inform you that my colleagues and I on the MACo Board of Directors have decided to cancel the in-person 2020 MACo Winter Conference.

After much deliberation, careful consideration of the regulations and safety precautions required, and due diligence from the staff in exploring alternate scaled-down versions of this event, we truly believe there is no option that would prove worth the risk to the health and safety of our conference participants.

However, if we have learned anything in the months since COVID-19 changed the way we live our lives, it is that local government will persevere – we will fill the void, we will bridge the gap, and we will continue to be there for the people of Maryland. And MACo will help us do just that.

Instead of a virtual or in-person Winter Conference, the MACo staff is working on building a members-only offering of 4 virtual meetings focused on the Association's 2021 legislative initiatives and the overarching policy categories that affect all members – education, land use, and tax/finance. This legislative session will surely be unprecedented, and we feel that focusing on what's to come and how to approach it is the best way to move forward and be successful in our advocacy.

Additionally, after the success of our Summer Series of e-learning sessions, we'll be working with our partners and industry leaders to provide a similar educational offering focused on resources and best practices to help you with the work of county government.

More details will be coming soon. I am looking forward to the opportunity to discuss our legislative priorities and strategies with the MACo members and hear from our partners about ways we can work together to serve our residents during these difficult—and underfunded—times. I hope you'll join us for these exciting virtual offerings.

If you have questions, please reach out to MACo's Member Services Director, Virginia White, at 410-269-0043 or vwhite@mdcounties.org.

On behalf of the Maryland Association of Counties, thank you for your understanding and your continued support of the work of county governments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Sharon H. Middleton'.

Sharon Green Middleton

President, MACo; Council Vice President, Baltimore City