



NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Virginia White, Member Services Director | 410.269.0043 | vwhite@mdcounties.org

MACo Board Cancels Upcoming Winter Conference

Annapolis, MD (09/08/2020) – The Maryland Association of Counties Board of Directors and Officers have reached a decision to cancel the upcoming Winter Conference due to the continued uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 public health crisis.

MACo’s Winter Conference, previously scheduled for December 9-11 in Cambridge, Maryland at the Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay Resort, would ordinarily draw nearly 800 participants for 3 days of policy-focused discussions and educational sessions. After examining social distancing requirements and safety precautions – including consideration of alternate versions of the event to reduce the size and offer hybrid online options – the MACo Board of Directors determined there was no version of the conference that would be worth the risk of an in-person offering.

Executive Director Michael Sanderson offered his views, saying:

“So much of the Winter Conference is about preparing for the upcoming legislative session. There’s a ton of value in the breakout sessions and panels – no question – but what makes this event special are the more casual interactions where you can connect with a legislator or potential ally for the issue you’re going to be working in January. That’s a difficult conversation to have from six feet away. The MACo Board made the right call here, and I’m proud to be serving under leaders who understand the risks and put their responsibilities to our members and participants first.”

MACo’s President and Baltimore City Council Vice President Sharon Green Middleton issued a statement today regarding the Association leadership’s decision:

“...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.”

[Read the full statement here.](#)

MACo's 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 focusing on what's to come and how to approach it is the best way to move forward and be successful in advocating for counties.

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

Read more on [MACo's blog](#).

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About the Maryland Association of Counties (MACo): MACo is a non-profit and non-partisan organization that serves Maryland county governments by articulating their needs and ideas to the Maryland General Assembly. The Association's membership is composed of county elected officials and representatives from Maryland's 23 counties and Baltimore City. MACo's members determine Association policy and positions on executive and legislative proposals through an elected Board of Directors and Legislative Committee. Through MACo's advocacy, training, education programs, and annual conferences, members are provided with endless opportunities to increase their capacity to serve their residents.