



## 2013 Legislative Session – MACo Highlights

**SECURED ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR COUNTIES** – Restored funding for local police and health departments and an expanded Disparity Grant program will provide \$23 million. The dropping of the county share of the assessment function from 90% to 50% will save counties approximately \$15 million. The imposition of a 9-1-1 charge on prepaid wireless services will generate between \$4 and \$7 million for emergency call centers.

**LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES SUCCESSFUL** – Counties won a seat on the Board of Trustees of the Maryland State Retirement and Pension System, achieved greater flexibility in setting personal property tax rates, and secured a more effective process for meeting comprehensive planning requirements.

**TAX CHANGES THWARTED. PROTECTED LOCAL REVENUES** – MACo was successful in amending or defeating legislation that would have expanded or reopened loopholes and reduced local tax revenues through changes in the recordation tax, personal property assessments, and the tax sale process.

**IMPORTANT WINS IN EMPLOYEE LIABILITIES** – MACo successfully resisted a broad range of legislation that would have created new and costly employee liabilities for counties through an expansion of workers' compensation benefits for law enforcement and first responders, the expansion of the use of sick leave, and the elimination of the deductibility of pension administrative fees.

**NEW ENVIRONMENTAL MANDATES AND PENALTIES AVOIDED** – MACo successfully opposed legislation that would have created costly new county mandates, including a proposed county-run bottle deposit program, new "zero waste" recycling and landfill diversion requirements, and increased water pollution and sewerage overflow penalties.

**SIMPLIFYING GOVERNMENT PROCESSES** – MACo played a key role in securing passage of legislation simplifying county government processes associated with personal property tax collections, local adoption of State laws and regulations, and clarifying police escort powers across jurisdictional boundaries.

**PUBLIC INFORMATION AND ETHICS** – MACo was able to permanently extend Public Information Act provisions creating a reasonable framework for the handling of electronic records requests and protecting county public bodies from being subject to unreasonable Open Meetings Act penalties.

**UNFUNDED MANDATES AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLEXITIES AVOIDED** – MACo successfully opposed or amended legislation placing undue burdens on counties through changes to the Homestead Property Tax Credit application deadline, the creation of a new "Buy American" procurement requirement, the expansion of prevailing wage, and the imposition of plaintiff attorney's fees in certain civil cases.