



The Greater Ocean City, Maryland  
Chamber of Commerce

# 2022

## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

### ABOUT THE CHAMBER

*The mission of the Greater Ocean City, Maryland Chamber of Commerce is to enhance the economic growth of the region by providing leadership, inspiration, education and development opportunities to support and promote all segments of the tourism and business community.*

The chamber has an active Government Relations Committee as well as a contracted lobbyist, Dennis Rasmussen, who works on our behalf in Annapolis. The committee maintains contact with our Eastern Shore Delegation as well as Federal representatives on issues that could impact our membership. The Government Relations Committee has identified the following priorities for the 2022 legislative session.

During the 2022 session, the chamber will communicate with membership on a weekly basis and include an updated list of bills that may affect our region. In addition, the Government Relations Committee will participate in weekly conference calls with our lobbyist to stay abreast of any changes or action that needs to be taken. We also plan to work closely with our elected officials and strengthen relationships with other statewide legislators who have similar priorities in their districts.

1

### TOURISM

#### Increase tourism promotion funding

Ocean City, MD Tourism metrics ~ <https://www.ococean.com/media/metric-reports>

Worcester County Tourism ~ <https://visitmarylandscoast.org/>

Maryland Office of Tourism reports ~ <https://industry.visitmaryland.org/industry-research-reports>

2

### GROUP/ASSOCIATION HEALTH CARE PLANS

#### Support any legislation that would support association or group health plans that would offer employer groups and associations the ability to provide health coverage for their member employees

*Association Health Plans (AHPs) are group health plans that employer groups and associations offer to provide health coverage for their members' employees. They allow small employers, through associations, to gain regulatory and economic advantages available to large employers. By participating, all of the employees of the members are part of the same group allowing the risk to be spread across a larger group of individuals instead of restricting the risk to just the employees of a specific business. It is common knowledge that individual health insurance premiums are lower for more lives that are covered under that plan, and the plan benefits are better.*

### 3

## SEASONAL UNEMPLOYMENT/UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

**Support any legislation that would support and preserve the J-1 Summer Work Travel Program and retain or support local workforce**

*Continue to monitor and oppose any federal immigration reform regulations that would limit or inhibit the J-1 International/Summer Work Travel Students*

Ocean City employs between 2000-4000 SWT students each season. Ocean City has become a model host community/destination for this Department of State Diplomacy Program. We have collected survey data outlining the negative impact that losing even a portion of this program would have on Ocean City businesses.

**Support a seasonal exemption/relief for unemployment insurance**

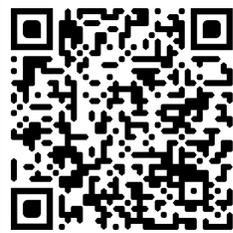
*Continue to support the most cost-effective fee schedule for small business: We would like to continue to explore the feasibility of a Seasonal Unemployment insurance category.*

Many Ocean City businesses (and other tourism-focused regions of MD) employ a substantial number of seasonal employees, however must pay the same rate for UI as a year-round employee. This is a tremendous financial burden.

### 4

## BUSINESS ADVOCACY

**Monitor any legislation that would create or increase any taxes or fees burdening small business members**



←—————→  
**Greater Ocean City Chamber of Commerce  
Legislative Updates**  
[oceancity.org/the-chamber/maryland-legislative-updates/](http://oceancity.org/the-chamber/maryland-legislative-updates/)

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

**Government Relations Committee Chair - Sal Fasano**  
**410-713-5807**

**Salvatorefasano1980@gmail.com**

←—————→  
**Executive Director - Lachelle Scarlato**

**443-513-6706**

**Lachelle@oceancity.org**

