



Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce
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Recess Alert April 15 – 27, 2019

Dear MCCC Members,

On April 15, Congress will adjourn for a two-week-long recess. Your legislators will be back home in their districts to meet with constituents, like you, to share updates on their efforts in Washington. They are eager to learn about how these efforts are impacting you. Take advantage of this opportunity to continue the Chamber's advocacy work by engaging with your Members of Congress.

MCCC has been active on Capitol Hill advocating for a pathway to growth for small businesses, but the work doesn't stop there – this is a great opportunity for you to reinforce MCCC's message.

As business owners, you are affected by government policy every day – from accessing capital to entering the federal market or simply paying your taxes. MCCC aggregates those concerns and issues to drive our policy priorities. While the Chamber's government relations team will continue to advocate for business owners across the county, state, and region, your engagement with lawmakers in your home districts can make all the difference.

Supporting Maryland's businesses requires support from Republicans and Democrats alike. MCCC is asking all of its members and supporters to meet with their Senators and Representatives to urge them to support MCCC's policy priorities.

Please find more information below, a guide for your meetings with your legislators, and tips on how to make your meeting count.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Georgette Godwin".

Georgette "Gigi" Godwin
President & CEO
Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce

To Lead, Advocate and Connect as the Voice of Business



What to Talk About

The Small Business Administration (SBA) has yet to implement the Small Business Runway Extension Act, a key victory of [MCCC's Midsize Initiative](#) signed into law last year. **Ask your Members of Congress to insist on SBA's expedited implementation of the law.**

MCCC Testimony on Capitol Hill

Last month Erin Allen, President of Contemporaries, Inc. and a Member of MCCC's Board of Directors, testified at a House Small Business Subcommittee hearing on the importance of SBA implementation of the Small Business Runway Extension Act. The law, a major win for MCCC signed by the President in December 2018, gives small firms more time to transition out of small business set aside contracts and into the full and open market. The legislation simply changes the current 3-year revenue average lookback to a 5-year average for purposes of size determination.

SBA has argued that the size determination changes should not take effect immediately, as the agency should first be able to utilize the rulemaking process and seek public comment. As Ms. Allen testified, SBA's approach has put business decisions in limbo. Outgoing SBA Administrator Linda McMahon committed in February to work on rulemaking immediately, and MCCC has urged SBA to expedite the process by issuing an interim final rule, thus cutting out months in the rulemaking process.

MCCC supports any effort to insist on implementation, and believes Congress is within its right to insist on expedited action. The longer implementation takes, the more uncertainty and confusion results for small and midsize businesses.

Here are some statistics you can share with your legislators:

- Over \$35 billion in federal contracts went to Maryland vendors in FY2018, making it a critical state for providing goods and services to the federal government.
- Montgomery County has the second-highest number of small businesses that do business with the federal government and is first in the nation as a contract provider of Health IT to the federal government.
- There are 325 midsize businesses doing federal contracting work, according to a Bloomberg Government report, competing not only with very large businesses but also small businesses who receive set aside federal work.

This bill was developed by MCCC's GovConNet Council to help small businesses transitioning to midsize businesses. Please share your own story about the importance of this initiative to your company, or companies you know who will be affected adversely by a delay in implementation.



How to Reach Your Elected Officials: Meet, Call, or Write

The best way to make sure MCCC's messages are heard is to schedule a meeting with your legislators through their local offices. You can find your Senators [here](#). You can find your Representative [here](#).

- Schedule a meeting with your legislators and/or their staff. Call your district office and be flexible with respect to scheduling. It doesn't need to be a formal meeting, you can arrange to meet your elected officials after a townhall or another public meeting. You may have to make more than one call to arrange this meeting.
- An alternative to one-on-one meetings is attending town hall meetings. These are open to the public and can generally be found on the Member's website or by contacting the office. If you attend one of these events, you can request an introduction to the Member.
- Additionally, you can use the content in this recess alert to send in the form of a letter to your legislator. You can find their contact information through the links above.
- Finally, social media, including Twitter and Facebook, are brief, but well-used avenues for communicating with legislators. Committees also have social media accounts where comments can be directed.

Making the Meeting Valuable

The goal of Congressional outreach during recess is to amplify the message MCCC builds in Washington, D.C. Start by introducing yourself, your company, and sharing information about the Chamber. Please share MCCC's priorities.

Three tips to get the most out of your meeting:

1. **Keep It Simple:** Members will likely not know the ins and outs of our policy requests. Likewise, you are not expected to be a policy expert. It is important to share how the issue(s) impacts your organization/business.
2. **Keep It Concise:** These meetings tend to be short. Know what you want to say and focus on the "ask" included with each policy priority.
3. **Follow Up:** Follow up matters. After the meeting, be sure to send the appropriate thank you email to the legislator and any staff members in attendance. If you discussed any items that need to be passed along, please do so in a timely fashion. If the legislator asked you any questions and you need additional information, please feel free to send your requests to Tricia Swanson at tswanson@mccc.md.com.

