



2026 CEAM Legislative Briefing

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Highlights

- 2026 Legislative Session
- Main Focus Areas
 - Budget Deficit
 - Affordability
 - Housing
 - Energy
 - Federal/Immigration
 - PFAS



2026 Legislative Session

- New Speak Joseline Peña-Melnyk
- New House Committee Leadership & Chairs
- New Committee – Government, Labor, & Elections
- Land Use & Energy swapped between ET & ECM.



2026 Legislative Session

- MACo tracked 742 (1010 in 2025) bills out of 2645. About 30% of bills MACo touched in some way.
- Budget challenges were punted to 2027.
- Affordability is a central priority. Major policy goals are starting to come into conflict.



MACo 2026 Legislative Session Snapshot



24 Counties, 1 Voice

County jurisdictions direct ALL MACo positions through weekly meetings www.mdcounties.org

81%

OF BILLS REACHED
MACo's DESIRED
OUTCOME

METHODS

386

Policy Blog
Articles Written

& Viewed by

92K

Readers

94K

Social Media
Impressions

Participated in

593

Meetings

742

Bills
Analyzed

Delivered

338

Pieces of
Testimony

RESULTS



Balanced Housing
Progress With
Community Input



Defended Local
Authority & Flexibility



Advanced Sustainable
Emergency
Management
Solutions



Blocked Costly,
Burdensome
Mandates



Advanced
Short-Term Rental
Safety &
Accountability



Juvenile Sentencing
To State Facilities,
Not Local Jails

2026 Legislative Session

HB925/SB719 – PFAS in Sewage Sludge

- Continue MDE PFAS reporting requirement.
- Rolling annual average.
- Bans land application of sewage sludge with a PFAS concentration above 50ppb.
- Sludge with levels between 25-50ppb has reduced land application & mitigation plan.
- Latest MDE data shows Baltimore City, WSSC, DC Water, & Several municipalities are at this level & land applying.
- ***BIG THANK YOU TO MAMWA!*** – This was a team win!

2026 Legislative Session

HB34/SB189 - Mason's Law

- **This bill is a significant WIN for counties.** This would have been a multi-million dollar unfunded mandate.
- By July 1st, 2027 - municipalities are required to inventory open drainage outlets owned by the municipality or privately.
- By April 1st, 2028 - make a plan for improving those outlets.
- By April 1st, 2030 - improve all municipally and privately owned outlets.
- Counties were NEVER included in the initial bill, MACo & MAMSA defended that exclusion aggressively.

Looking Ahead

Budget, Budget, Budget

- Maryland's budget situation is continuing to deteriorate.
- Major Factors:
 - Federal cuts & political fights
 - Blueprint
 - Unexpectedly high healthcare spending
 - Competition with neighbors

Future Preemption

- Abundance Agenda
- Energy prices
- Housing prices
- Rising cost of living.
- Counties no longer have deference in policy areas once seen as a local prerogative.
- New attitude/willingness for stronger state action nationally.



THANK YOU CEAM!

Please reach out with any follow up questions or areas not addressed in this briefing.

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