



See pages 4-12 for more Expo photos.

"We saw a lot of customers, picked up a few great leads. The venue and the food were great. The Awards ceremony was short, sweet and to the point."

*Lori Rodman,
Century Distributors*

"We found the Expo to be a good event for Empire and you can expect us participating more in the future."

*Jack Stull
Empire Petroleum*

"I just want to let you know what a great show you put together. We got a lot of leads and it was a pleasure meeting people in the new marketplace we recently entered."

*Bill McCabe
Service Station Vending Equipment*

"Thank you for a great event last night! I think this was my first time attending and thought it was well done all around. I thoroughly enjoyed seeing the recognition that so many great individuals received."

*Joe Wills
The Wills Group*

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KIRK'S KORNER

Member Update

by Kirk McCauley
Director of Member Relations & Government Affairs

MIKE MILLER STEPS DOWN AS MARYLAND SENATE PRESIDENT

Bill Ferguson was voted to become next president in the Maryland senate by a unanimous vote of the democratic caucus in the wake of current president Mike Miller announcing he is stepping down due to treatment for prostate cancer. The vote before the whole senate will be necessary before its official, but the democrats have a majority in the senate, so the outcome is known.

The senate president is all-mighty because he appoints committee heads and who sits on different committees. Senator Ferguson is 36 years old and represents the 46th district of Baltimore City. Ferguson's day job is Director of Reform Initiatives in the school of education; he was a member of the Kirwan Commission on Education that recommended spending 3 billion dollars on education. He holds a master's degree in teaching from John Hopkins and a law degree from the University of Maryland.

While Senator Ferguson is considered a liberal, we will see if he takes a balanced approach like President Miller always did. His past record says no, he will stay progressive and that could spell trouble for business. I don't know if he ever had to make a payroll or understands what a business goes through in order to survive.

WMDA/CAR will do all possible so our members have a voice. Let us hope Senate President Ferguson ascending to the top represents all Marylanders and legislators on both sides of the isle.

ARE YOUR PUMPS OPEN 24/7

I had a phone caller with a question the day before the Expo. The question was, can a dealer leave his pumps on when no employee is at the station. Seems simple enough to do credit card business only at the pumps, inside not open, no employee to pay.

I knew Chris Ralston, program manager at MDE oil control, would be at the Expo the next day so I told the caller Chris

would be at the MDE table on Tuesday and there is no one better to ask. I had seen myself, a handful of stations doing this, so I thought regulations might have changed. The dealer and I did stop and the answer was there are NO fueling facilities with permission to sell to the general public without a C-operator on site. There are unmanned/unattended commercial sites that have written permission for 24/7 operation. Now would be a good time to review regulations pertaining to unmanned/unattended operations. [Link to Fact Sheet on unmanned UST dispensing Facilities is below.](#) Go to the link and look for Under Ground Storage Tanks and the last fact sheet on the list says NEW.

The down side of operations outside of regulation is not only a monetary fine but significant repercussions if a spill or fire were to happen.

GAITHERSBURG ROYAL FARM JOINT PUBLIC HEARING

A joint public hearing for the schematic development plan application was held on Monday, October 21, 2019. The planning commission record will be closed at 5pm on November 25, 2019. The mayor and city council record will be closed at 5pm on December 11, 2019. Anticipated final action will happen on January 6, 2020. Comment on this application by email at planning@gaithersburgmd.gov or you can mail your comments to 31 South Summit Avenue, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20877.

Please note that any comments submitted for this application will be part of the record and posted on the project page. Thanks to WMDA/CAR attorney Jim Parsons for this information.

GAITHERSBURG WAWA APPEAL

Dealers in Gaithersburg will appeal to Montgomery County circuit court the plan to build a WAWA convenience store across from Gaithersburg High School. The group could use all the support and financial help they can get. Contact Michael Smith at msagora@msn.com or Troy Parcelles at troy.cwpinc@gmail.com.

[Link to Fact Sheet – https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/LAND/OilControl/Pages/factsheetpublications.aspx](https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/LAND/OilControl/Pages/factsheetpublications.aspx)

This could set the tone for all Montgomery County moving forward. Spending a little money now could save a lot down the road. Moving forward volume will hard to come by with programs like the Transportation Climate Initiative (TCI) and tax breaks on electric transportation. With volume on a decline the last thing Montgomery dealers need is another high-volume station.

PROPOSED BEVERAGE TAX IN DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

The added cost of the tax would be 1.5 cents per ounce. The tax applies to sugary drinks with any "natural common sweeteners." So, it encompasses Gatorade, sweetened iced tea or coffee and orange juice with added sugar, along with sodas. Our soda fountains will be hit hard. A 5-gallon box of syrup would have an additional cost of \$48.00 and a 20-oz drink would have 30 cents added to the cost.

As in Philadelphia, this will only drive customers and their tax dollars to Virginia and Maryland. Another reason to go out of the District of Columbia to buy your groceries, sodas, gas and tobacco and have enough money left over to eat dinner while you visiting another jurisdiction.

WMDA has joined a group "Alliance for an Affordable D.C." The link <https://www.afforddc.com/default.aspx> has a ton of information and an avenue to contact council members.

HELLO MEMBERS!

Let me start by saying a BIG THANK YOU to every one of you who attended this year's Annual Expo and Awards Dinner on October 15 at Martin's West and made it a Huge Success. We had a GREAT turnout and received such POSITIVE feedback from Vendors and Members alike – **Thank you, Shukriya!**

We had 500 people at our Awards Dinner! And a better turnout than years past at the Expo. I got to meet so many members from the Convenience Store side of business and a few from the Automotive Repair side of business.

Please let me know if there are any vendors that you would like for us to invite next year to attend our Expo and we will make every effort to make that happen. Any and all suggestions are Welcome! Remember this Expo is FOR YOU!

Please enjoy some of the photographs from the event (see pages 4-12).

Swapna Sripada
Director of Operations
WMDA/CAR



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Star Financial
Star Insurance Company
Sunoco
The Wills Group
Utica National Insurance Group
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WMDA



INDUSTRY RECOGNITIONS



HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE
Riaz Ahmad



FRIEND OF THE INDUSTRY
Pedro Leyton



MEMBER OF THE YEAR
Ather Chaudhry



MANAGER OF THE YEAR
Liaquat Memon



TECHNICIAN OF THE YEAR
Ben McMillan



**Maryland Comptroller
Peter Franchot gave the
Keynote Address at the
Awards Dinner.**



CONTEMPORARY CONVENIENCE STORES



AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Airpark Jiffy Mart
Rana Birinder & Jerry Singh



AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Thompson Creek Shell Dash In
Khawaja Amin



AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Harwood Market Exxon
Ather Chaudhry



AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Lanham Sunoco
NSR Petro Services



AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Chesapeake House Sunoco
Fazal Sirhandi



AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
BP Travel Center & Truck Stop
Ather Chaudhry

CONTEMPORARY CONVENIENCE STORES



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Raj Gupta



AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Waugh Chapel Mart Sunoco
Metin Omer



AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
New Hampshire Avenue Mobil
E&C Enterprises

GAS & GO



AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Orleans Street Sunoco
Sultan Masood



AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Frederick Shell Car Wash
Joe Parsley



LEGACY CONVENIENCE STORES



AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Olney Sunoco
Kenneth Wilhelm



AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Fletchers Convenience Store
Robert Fletcher



AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Bladensburg Exxon
Hank Kim



AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Newport Exxon Car Wash
Robert Weber



AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Crystal CMF
Parwinder Singh



AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Germantown Liberty
Paul Cho



AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Hob's CMF
Carl Hobson



AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Eldersburg Exxon
Jacob & Afshin Attar

BAYED STATIONS



ROBERT EASTHAM AWARD
River Hill Sunoco
Kenneth Wilhelm



AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Beltway Sunoco
Gary Diamond



AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Flower Hill Liberty
Chuck & Troy Parcelles



AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Greenspring Shell – Auto Stream Car Care
Rick Levitan & Doug Grills



AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Eastport Shell
Ehtsham Zia, Shoukat Choudhry Naveed Wahla & Zahid Wahla



AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Darnestown Liberty
Alex Diaz/Aldo Carbonaro



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Greenbelt Auto Sunoco
Bill Novak & Joe Aulisio



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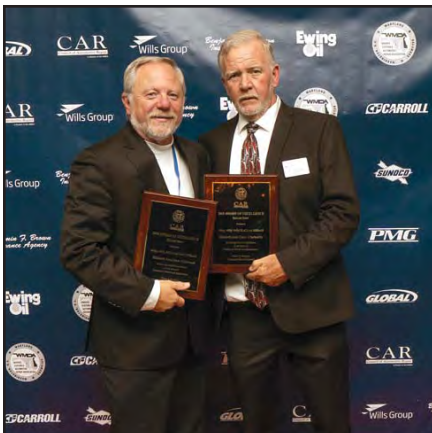
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Global Partners



BRYANS ROAD SHELL DASH IN
Rana Birinder & Jerry Singh
The Wills Group



CAR TALK

The Importance of Being Involved

by Brian England

Recently I attended a CCBC advisory meeting and I learned how supportive the staff at CCBC is of our employees attending classes. Attending bi-annual advisory meetings keeps us up-to-date on the program. Growing our own technicians is critically important for the health of our industry. The State of Maryland Apprenticeship program, coupled with school-to-work programs, enables us to train the next generation of technicians.

My ears also picked up when the topic changed to updating the Maryland Inspection program. Billy Hillmuth reminded everyone that he had been on committees that reviewed the program and made recommendations. But one recommendation to expand the program has been ignored by the state police that oversee the program. Officer Stacher said that expanding the program to inspect older vehicles was a nonstarter because of the effect on lower income groups. This has been the go-to excuse in the past. Of course it's an issue, but it doesn't mean we can't solve it. I believe membership should lobby the state police to include expanded Maryland Inspection to cover older vehicles and people movers that avoid inspections because of a loophole in the law.

This brings up the whole issue of what's important to us and our businesses! This is where the membership should be getting involved. Let the board know what's important to you!

There are other issues that affect us that are more important than issues pushed by the Chamber of Commerce and National Federation of Independent Businesses!

It's time to get involved before the legislative session starts in January.

Want to expand MSI? E-mail van.stacher@md.gov.

Want more information about the "Right to Know" law passed in Maryland? E-mail the board!


It's not only time to get involved, it's important to get involved!

What issues are important to you? Let WMDA/CAR know and I will write a follow up article to share your opinions on the issues you want addressed. ♦


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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

News from Washington

by Roy Littlefield IV

WMDA/CAR, being represented by SSDA-AT, has remained active in discussions centered around safety inspections and working to preserve the programs left in the United States. This year there were 23 bills around the country introduced to eliminate safety inspections. Luckily, they were all defeated thanks to our grassroots efforts and partnering with other state associations.

In Texas, 5 bills were introduced to alter or eliminate the program. In Hawaii, 8 bills were introduced and the only one that ended up passing was the one that called for a study to be done on the impact of safety inspections. Hawaii plans to model the Texas study. And California for the first time in a long time, is now considering adding a safety inspection. There is a question in the state right now over who would have the authority to run the program. It is clear that in most cases, safety inspections remain under attack, as only a handful of

states even have a program left. SSDA-AT has advocated for national safety inspections and we plan to explore this topic for our 2020 Lobby Day.

Recently, SSDA-AT participated in a Small Business Legislative Council (SBLC) meeting. There was lengthy discussion on Online Sales Simplicity and the Small Business Act with Robert Henson, Economic Legislative Assistant to Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH). This bill prohibits states from imposing a sales tax collection duty on certain remote sellers. A "remote seller" is a person without a physical presence in a state who makes a sale in the state. A state may impose a sales tax collection duty on a remote seller only for a sale that occurs after January 1, 2019. In the case of a small business remote seller (no more than \$10 million in gross annual receipts in the United States), a state may not impose a sales tax collection duty on any person other than the purchaser if the sale is made (1) on or after June 21, 2018; and (2) before the date that is 30 days after the states develop and Congress approves an interstate compact, applicable to the state and sale, governing the imposition of tax collection duties on remote sellers. We are currently gathering feedback from members on this proposal. Please share your thoughts with us.

Last month, SSDA-AT also attended a Family Business Coalition meeting. At the meeting we discussed the latest concerning the estate tax, tax extenders, technical corrections, tax proposals put forward by Congressional Democrats, and wealth taxes. Bernie Sanders has called for an 8% wealth tax on the richest Americans.

SSDA-AT was one of 151 groups that signed the Family Business Coalition letter supporting the Death Tax Repeal Act. The House legislation (H.R. 218) now has 116 co-sponsors including 2 Democrats and the Senate bill (S. 215) has 33 co-sponsors.

We also participated in an SBLC webinar titled "Understanding the Newest Final Overtime Regulations." We plan to share the information provided in the webinar with you as you prepare to comply with the new rules which will take effect on January 1, 2020.





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In October, Senators Richard Burr (R-NC) and Joe Manchin (D-WV) introduced S. 2602, Recognizing the Protection of Motorsports (RPM) Act, which preserves American motorsports by stopping regulatory overreach by the federal government.

American motorsports began with amateur racers converting regular vehicles into racecars, a legacy that continues to this day. In 2015, however, the Obama Administration proposed a rule that would let the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) fine amateur motorsports enthusiasts for converting their personal vehicles into racecars. The rule ran counter to nearly half a century of Congressional intent under the Clean Air Act. While the EPA removed this problematic language from its final rulemaking, the agency still maintains that vehicle modification for motorsports is unlawful.

"American racing runs on traditions," said Senator Burr. "For more than 50 years, motorsports enthusiasts have purchased cars and modified them to race, off of public roads. However, this tradition was threatened when the Obama EPA attempted to make these modifications illegal. This legislation upholds Congress' intent of the Clean Air Act and protects motorsports, for professionals and amateurs alike, for years to come. I'm proud to work with my colleagues on this bipartisan legislation, and I look forward to seeing it move through the Senate."

"A big part of the fun of motorsports is the tradition of modifying regular cars into racecars," said Senator Manchin. "This legislation upholds amendments to the Clean Air Act that exempt modified vehicles and racecars from certain

environmental regulations, protecting motorsports for years to come. I am proud to be a part of this bipartisan bill and look forward to the boost it will give to motorsports."

Background: In 1965, Congress passed the Motor Vehicle Air Pollution Control Act, which defined the term "motor vehicle" as "any self-propelled vehicle designed for transporting persons or property on a street or highway." In 1970, Congress clarified that the Clean Air Act's anti-tampering provision does not apply to vehicles manufactured or modified for racing.

Congress passed the Clean Air Act Amendments in 1990 to again exclude vehicles used solely for competition from the definition of "non-road vehicle," or a vehicle that is powered by a non-road engine and that is not a motor vehicle or a vehicle used solely for competition. This clarification was instructive as it separates "vehicles used solely for competition" from "motor vehicles."

After examining the legislative history, it is clear that Congress never intended to provide the EPA with the authority to regulate vehicles used solely for competition, including vehicles modified to be used exclusively for racing.

The Recognizing the Protection of Motorsports Act simply reaffirms Congress position and further protects amateur motorsports from devastating regulations in the future.

S. 2602 has 24 co-sponsors in the Senate, including Senators Thom Tillis (R-NC), Lindsey Graham (R-SC), Tim Scott (R-SC), James Risch (R-ID), Mike Crapo (R-ID), Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV), Jon Tester (D-MT), Deb Fischer (R-NE), Mike Braun (R-IN), Todd Young (R-IN), John Barrasso (R-WY), Jim Inhofe (R-OK), Doug Jones (D-AL), Cory Gardner (R-CO), Ron Johnson (R-WI), Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Ted Cruz (R-TX), Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ), Dan Sullivan (R-AK), John Boozman (R-AR), Marco Rubio (R-FL), Kevin Cramer (R-ND), Jerry Moran (R-KS), and Mike Rounds (R-SD).

We will let you know as things move forward with the RPM Acts reintroduction in the House. SSDA-AT will keep working to find more co-sponsors. ♦

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EDITORIAL

Senator Grassley Moves on Tax Extenders

by Roy Littlefield

Senate Finance Committee Chairman Charles Grassley has joined with Democratic ranking member Ron Wyden to approach Ways and Means Committee Chairman Richard Neal and Republican Ranking Member Kevin Brady with the goal of producing a bi-partisan tax extender bill acceptable to both houses.

The staffs of these “four horsemen,” including the Joint Committee on Taxation, have just begun work, thus we will wait to reach out to our Finance and Ways and Means committee contacts to press our most immediate issue: whether there’s intention to honor the broad consensus for long-range policy via permanency that both tax-writing committees committed to this year, or will this be another stop-gap bill of two or three years?

SSDA-AT is not giving up the fight for permanent WOTC, however the final round is beginning. It’s quite likely the Grassley initiative will decide the question for this year.

Instead of writing a “chairman’s mark” for extenders in the Senate alone, Senator Grassley is aiming for a bicameral chairman’s mark bearing solid support that’ll pass both houses and the White House budget watchdogs who scrub every bill.

This is a high-power effort; top leaders of both parties and both tax-writing are committed. Leaders will consult members of their committees, thus Ways and Means and Finance Committee members of both parties will have a voice in the outcome.

Senator Grassley’s four-sided talks allows House Republicans, who are a minority in the House, to work with their majority in the Senate when negotiating for their priorities; similarly, the Democratic majority in the House can work with their colleagues in the Senate to boost the case for their priorities.

Expect every tax extender to be evaluated and prioritized from the four different perspectives; this includes not only WOTC, but the VOW to Hire Heroes Act veterans job credits, Indian Employment Tax Credit, Empowerment Zone Tax

Credit, and Employee Retention Credit for disaster areas.

The automotive aftermarket, especially service station dealers and repair shop operators, are among the highest users of the Work Opportunity Tax Credit.

In addition, recommendations SSDA-AT has made for improving the foregoing should again be put forward: new target groups for military spouses and reservists, transitioning foster youth, removal of age-40 cap on SNAP recipients, extending WOTC to all recipients of Social Security Disability Insurance, extending WOTC to private non-profit employers to open more jobs in healthcare and education, and amending the Indian Employment Tax Credit as proposed by the Senate Employment and Community Development Task Force.

Heretofore, our Fifty-State Lobbying Plan concentrates on the Finance Committee and heavyweight senators – this should continue, as we must rely upon the Senate to get the job done if the House should stumble.

But importantly, we must now prioritize Ways and Means members of both parties as lobbying targets as well.

In addition, we aim to keep the third and fourth-ranking members of the House Democratic Leadership, Majority Whip James Clyburn (D-SC) and Assistant Democratic Leader Ben Ray Lujan (D-NM), abreast of the action, as they are close to Speaker Pelosi who calls the shots.

There are clear obstacles to success of Senator Grassley’s initiative. Ways and Means has approved measures to expand the Earned Income and Child and Dependent Care tax credits – these may be unacceptable to Senate Republicans. Ways and Means Ranking Member Brady has proposed a short-list of technical amendments to TCJA, which Democrats have balked on. Some Ways and Means Democrats want the extenders to be paid for, as well as softening the burden of the state and local tax deduction.

These and other issues will have to be prioritized and sorted out in the days ahead. We don’t know how long it will take,

but plan for continuous lobbying from now to Christmas.

We estimate the odds are good for the Grassley initiative producing an extenders bill containing significant number of expired and due-to-expire provisions. The odds of passage are another thing.

For too long, Congress has allowed sections of the tax code which taxpayers have relied upon to expire. This is no way to conduct the public's business. It's unfair to taxpayers who must wait, and often suffer financial loss, to obtain recompense for a tax benefit that has expired. Congress has often promised this issue will be rectified, but the uncertainty of not knowing when Congress will get around to enacting a remedy for the loss associated with an expired tax provision continues.

The obvious solution is a tax code with fewer temporary provisions. Congress should make permanent all existing temporary provisions judged to be meritorious, and allow those remaining to be terminated or, if necessary, continue temporarily. The Ways and Means Committee held a hearing on this matter this year and agreed with this solution. We believe the Senate Finance Committee agrees also.

The work opportunity tax credit is not a handout to an employer, rather it's a win-win for the American people. A disadvantaged worker gets a job, which is the object intended by Congress, a job he might never have been hired for without WOTC. The employer is pleased because he has filled a job vacancy and receives a tax credit. Their community prospers from spending by the worker and employer. These communities have their share of poverty areas and people on welfare.

With WOTC, job applications identify these individuals, and employers get referrals from local welfare agencies, veterans, and disability organizations. Many of them are hard-up for income, food, and clothing, many are ill or depressed, and wouldn't ordinarily be hired if it weren't for WOTC. We're helping the neediest people in our communities to find work – this is the aim of WOTC – it's the best anti-poverty program for the cost, and without it, many people who deserve a chance to work aren't going to get that chance.

A low unemployment rate, with more job openings than takers is being misconstrued; it doesn't mean WOTC isn't needed. Everyone competes for a job and has qualifications checked. WOTC workers compete with high school graduates, often from better schools. The July employment report shows the unemployment rate for those between ages 16-24 is 9.1

percent, not the 3.7 percent national average; for blacks and Hispanics, the unemployment rate is higher. Department of Labor data shows most WOTC workers are in this lower age group.

Moreover, the labor force participation of those between 16-24 is 61.8 percent in July, a far cry from 77.5 percent in July 1989, confirming that many young people are "disconnected youth," 6 million neither employed nor in school. Many who've been homeless or in poverty have given up looking for work and are counted as "discouraged workers" and "marginally attached to the workforce" – 5.7 million in June 2019.

Governors have identified more than 8,000 "opportunity zones" of high poverty where people's opportunity to escape is falling rather than improving according to the latest data from the Census Bureau. These chronically unemployed workers comprise the specially targeted populations aided by WOTC. BLS numbers 11 million individuals in the lowest wage decile of employed workers, and 28 percent of them found jobs through WOTC. WOTC works for the people it was intended for, those stuck at the bottom, and as each year a new cohort of these populations commences its journey, WOTC must be there. ♦

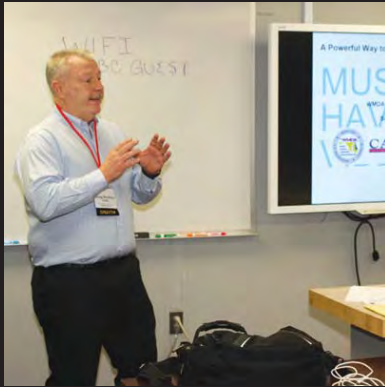


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