

NOZZLE & WRENCH

AN OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE WASHINGTON DC, MARYLAND & DELAWARE SERVICE STATION & AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR ASSOCIATION



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JULY 2020

Prohibits the distribution of flavored E-cigs within 0.5 miles of Elementary, middle, high schools, library's, or recreation facilities in county.

Effective July 3, 2020

KIRK'S CORNER

Montgomery County Flavor Ban on E-Cigarettes



By Kirk Mccauley,
Director Of Member
Relations &
Government Affairs

so you should be able to sell any product in stock, but you will not be able to buy from a distributor after stock is gone. I would also suggest that you keep your receipt for purchase before July 3rd if your store is checked. I have no doubt that Montgomery County Health Department will be checking businesses with added personnel and you will have to show proof of purchase date.

Links to bills 29-19 and 32-19 below:

<https://tinyurl.com/bill32-19>

<https://tinyurl.com/bill29-19>

P4 Sounds Like a Bingo Call, Will it be a Winner for Small Business?

The Prioritized Paycheck Protection Program Act (P4) was introduced June 18 by Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship ranking member Senator Ben Cardin, Maryland, Senator Chris Coon, Delaware, and Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, New Hampshire. P4 would allow small businesses that have already borrowed under the Paycheck Protection Program to apply for a second round of funding.

Bill 29-19 and 32-19

This is confusing to say the least, but here is my take:

- Prohibits the distribution of all E-cigs within 0.5 miles of **middle and high schools**.
- Prohibits the distribution of flavored E-cigs within 0.5 miles of Elementary, middle, high schools, library's, or recreation facilities in county.

In conclusion non flavored e-cigs can be distributed except for 0.5 miles from **middle and high schools** and flavored e-cigs can be distributed except 0.5 miles from **all schools, libraries, and recreation facilities in county**.

Both these bills do not address retail, only the distribution



Continues on page 4

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...the bill would reserve the lesser of \$25 billion or 20% of PPP funds for employers with 10 or fewer employees and small businesses in underserved and rural communities.

Continued from page 1

Rep. Angie Craig, Minnesota member of the House Small Business Committee, introduced P4 legislation June 18 in the house.

In order to qualify for the second round of funding, borrowers must be self-employed or have no more than 100 employees, and they must have experienced a greater than 50% loss in revenues relative “to a quarter in the previous year or another relevant period.” Eligible small businesses also must have already completely spent their initial PPP loans or be on pace to exhaust them, and they must certify that they require further funding to support their ongoing operations for payroll and eligible non-payroll costs.

According to an earlier release by Cardin, the bill would reserve the lesser of \$25 billion or 20% of PPP funds for employers with 10 or fewer employees and small businesses in underserved and rural communities. Eligible small businesses can get as much as 250% of monthly payroll costs worth up to \$2 million under the bill, and they can apply for loan forgiveness eight weeks after the loans have been disbursed.

Clearly if P4 makes it through both chamber and signed into law it could very well be the flotation device that keeps small businesses head above water. Make no misstate, P4 is a bill along with PPP, EIDL, and Express Bridge loans that will come back to business as higher taxes in future years but this is a case where you have to survive to even worry about the future.

PPP deadline for applying is set for June 30, and still has \$100 million dollars that has not been tapped. WMDA/CAR has advocated that deadline should be extended. P4 would not only extend it but would give businesses a second shot.

Links for PPP Information:

<https://tinyurl.com/popsballoan>

<https://tinyurl.com/pppforgiveapp>

<https://tinyurl.com/pppborrowerapp>

<https://tinyurl.com/CalculateLoanAmount>

July 1, 2020 Changes to Minimum Wage and Fuel Taxes

Maryland

Motor Fuel Tax rates will drop 0.004 (4 tenths of a cent) to 0.3630 for gasoline and same drop for diesel to 0.3705. Consumer Price Index (CPI) went up 0.005 and the Sale and Use Tax Equivalent (SUTE) rate went Down 0.009

As of July 1, 2020

MD gas tax 0.3630

MD diesel tax 0.3705

Link to Comptrollers Combined Applicable Motor Fuel Tax Rates

<https://tinyurl.com/FuelTaxRates>

Maryland Minimum Wage

Maryland Minimum wage can be a little confusing, especially to multiple county owners.

Montgomery county will be only county that wages change on July 1, 2020 and they have 3 wage levels depending on number of employees

Montgomery County Only

51 or more employees \$14.00

11 to 50 employees \$13.25

10 or less employees \$13.00

Maryland State and Prince Georges will stay the same until 1-1-21 and then P.G. will follow Maryland minimum wage laws. *Link to all 3 jurisdiction minimum wage posters below which are required to be posted.

MD

<https://tinyurl.com/MDminWagePst>

PG

<https://tinyurl.com/PGMinWagePst>

MOCO

<https://tinyurl.com/MocoMinWagePst>

*Maryland Law does have a provision that the Board of Public Works can delay Maryland portion of pay raise for a year if economic condition meets a certain criterion. Will keep you updated on when decision is made.

District of Columbia Minimum Wage as of July 1, 2020

Minimum wage: \$15.00 - Required minimum wage poster link below:

<https://tinyurl.com/DCminWagePst>

Gas and diesel taxes stayed the same.

Delaware Minimum Wage and Fuel Tax Stayed the Same

Required Minimum Wage poster link below and I want to note that Delaware legislators are going to vote on some legislation in the next few day via virtual session and I will keep you updated on anything that could affect our member locations.

<https://tinyurl.com/DEminWagePst>

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District of Columbia and New Taxes

Mayor Bowser sent budget bill to City Council and there is sections of council that wants to add heavy business taxes to budget. In this time of COVID 19 and small business fighting headwinds to stay alive, not a good idea. Businesses that close can pay no taxes. Let business breath and in the long run pay more taxes. Letter WMDA/CAR sent to District of Columbia Mayor and Council members is shown on this page.

Employers in the District of Columbia have been paying 0.62% of total payroll for family Leave since July 1, 2019.

Starting July 1, 2020, Employees can start using family leave under guidelines of Office of Paid Family Leave. Below is the link for employers that outlines their obligations and for what reason leave can be used by an employee.

<https://dcpaidfamilyleave.dc.gov/employers/>



Chairman Phil Mendelson
Members Committee of the Whole
RE: Fiscal Year 2021 Budget

I am sending this on behalf of my members that operate service stations, convenience store and automotive repair facilities. All my members are considered essential business. They have been open during these unprecedented days of COVID 19 and serving District of Columbia community even when they were operating at a loss. I am sure other trade groups would report the same.

Since COVID shut down and loss of traffic to their businesses they still had to pay their bills, mortgage, lease payment and payroll. Now is not the time to add taxes and fees as they try to recover.

Not adding cost to do business in the form of taxes and fees will give businesses a chance to recover and will benefit District of Columbia tax base long term.

Respectfully,

Kirk McCauley
WMDA/CAR
301-775-0221
kmccauley@wmda.net

So Predictable it Was Funny

In Maryland we will see a .004 cent reduction in motor fuel tax, cost of living (CPI) up .005 and sales and Use Tax Equivalent (SUTE) down .009 and you get the .004 reduction. I called the comptroller's office to ask where the form was for gas in the ground rebate, after all we pay the office July 1, price increases. The answer was the law did not provide to give a rebate back, only to charge when motor fuel tax goes up. **Who did not Know that - LOL**

COVID 19 and Your Employees

All employers need to have a conversation with their employees about the need to keep the facility clean, service counters, bays, pump islands and nozzles, coffee service and all pin pads inside and outside. It is also important to have your employees look their best and with uniforms. All this is not new, it is the way it should be all the time with or without COVID 19. With COVID it a must if you want to stay in business.

Face masks are a must also. Post signs to let customers know you expect 6 feet of separation and what you are doing to protect them.

Have the conversation with employees about what happens to them will affect every employee and the location. Discuss the need to have safe practices away from work.

A good example is a Sheetz here in southern Maryland where an employee was diagnosed with COVID 19. They are now shut down for at least 14 days until all employees are clear, and extensive cost in cleaning entire store. In the public's mind will they stop at this location in the near future? Bad press sticks like glue. ■

Now's a Great Time to Hire



By Sandi Weaver
BA Auto Care, Inc.

We have been given a great opportunity thanks to some dealerships less than ideal way of handling things during Covid-19 lock down. I've heard some dealers let people go, others made them come in even with little to no work and some took away PTO and other benefits. While we have all struggled and done our best to both take care of our employees and keep our business afloat, I hope we all did better than this.

We had an employee leave to take care of his wife due to health concerns not related to the virus so we were on the hunt for someone to join our team. I wanted to hit the ground running and posted on a hiring site, Facebook and reached out to our current employees among other places. We are usually looking for apprentices or semi-skilled technicians but this time we were looking to replace a hard to find skilled technician with European experience.

Below is some insight into each of the places I have personally tried while hiring:

- **Hiring Sites:** I've learned a lot about hiring sites like Indeed and Monster over the years and most of the teaching came from the hiring site's staff. I had no idea they have people to help you with your job post. They advise on what wording gets the most attention, how best to spend your budget to get the best resumes and what, in general, attracts the most people in our specific industry. This is ultimately where we've found the best candidates and have hired from. You will get a fair amount of people apply just to meet their unemployment requirements but with their easy to use platform, responding is easy and you can save a template to make it even easier.
- **Facebook:** This was my first-time using Facebook and we got decent results at no cost. We did attract people from other countries but we also attract a few decent candidates and for the price, you can't beat it.
- **Craigslist:** I have used Craigslist in the past to no avail. I have heard many people who have had great success but it take time to weed through the not qualified or even in our industry people. There is a cost but it is minimal.
- **Employees:** Most of our technicians have been with us for a long time and don't know many people outside our shop. We have hired on a technician's recommendation and this is by far the best and easiest way to find someone. Your tech knows the person, likes them and knows if they will be a good fit for your shop.
- **Trade schools/Community colleges:** this is the best way to find someone who wants to learn and you can grow to be an amazing skilled technician. Build a relationship with the college or trade school in your area. When they know you and see your dedication to the industry, they will let you know when a good student is looking for a job. ■



Hiring Sites: They advise on what wording gets the most attention, how best to spend your budget to get the best resumes and what, in general, attracts the most people in our specific industry.

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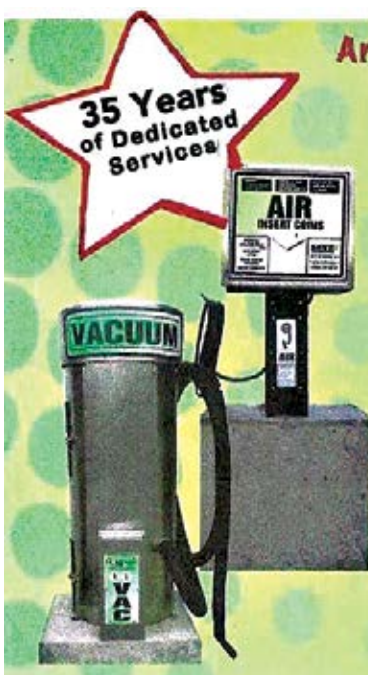


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...it is important that you take the time and effort to respond to a negative review – not only for the customer in question, but for every other customer who will see this exchange.

Social Media Q&A: How do I Handle a Negative Review of My Business?

Customers usually review businesses at the extremes – when their service has been excellent or when their experience has been poor. It's easy to thank customers for their kind words, but one of the most common questions our social media team receives is “How do I respond to a negative review?”

First, it is important that you take the time and effort to respond to a negative review – not only for the customer in question, but for every other customer who will see this exchange. A well-handled complaint can go a long way toward helping a brand make a good name for itself. It shows you care about your customers and their experience.

Just be sure to answer calmly and politely. No matter how you may feel privately, it's important to remember this is a public exchange and you want to portray your business in the best way possible. To help you do so, here's a step-by-step guide on how to write a response to a negative review:

STEP 1

Acknowledge the customer's complaint and show them that the concerns raised have been heard.

STEP 2

Apologize for the service issue and explain how the situation will be handled by you and your staff. The way you handle the situation is up to your discretion, but the way the customer's experience is managed will affect others' opinions of your business.

STEP 3

You can also ask for more information about the incident or schedule a meeting or phone call to discuss the matter further. Make sure someone speaks to the dissatisfied customer and hears out his or her concerns and apologizes directly.

STEP 4

Make it clear that this is not how you want to do business and that you will do everything possible to make sure this situation doesn't happen again.

STEP 5

Make a gesture to rectify the situation – whether that's assuming the cost of a repair, providing a free service in the future, or some other incentive to keep the person's business and make amends for the previous issue.

Remember: The more heartfelt and earnest your reply, the better the exchange will go. Responding to negative reviews can be a challenge, but doing so affects the perception of your business, and ultimately your bottom line. So, take control of the situation and you'll be able to not only win some honor back but propel your business to the next level. ■

This article was created by the team at Net Driven. Learn more about Net Driven digital marketing solutions by visiting www.netdriven.com.





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WMDA/CAR Golf Outing & Fundraiser Registration Form

Thursday, July 23, 2020

Shotgun Start at 9:30 a.m.
Renditions Golf Course
1380 Central Ave., Davidsonville, MD

\$169 per Golfer/\$600 for Foursome

*\$169/Golfer includes Greens Fee, Cart fee, bag drop,
Grab n Go Breakfast and Boxed Lunches. Each Golfer will get
two Drink tickets redeemable for Alcoholic/Non-Alcoholic
Beverages at the Beverage cart.*

- 8:30 a.m.** Breakfast and access to driving range
9:30 a.m. Shotgun Start (4-Man Scramble Format)
2:00 p.m. Boxed lunch outdoors with
contest prize distribution

*Refreshments will be available on the course. WMDA/CAR will assist in
pairing individual registered golfers to make a foursome if requested.*



**50% of net proceeds will be donated
to the Alzheimer's Association**

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Golfer #1: _____ Golfer #2: _____

Golfer #3: _____ Golfer #4: _____

☐ Please assist in making a foursome if less than 4 golfers listed above.

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Company Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

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WMDA/CAR Golf Outing & Fundraiser

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Renditions Golf Course
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ADDITIONAL SPONSORSHIP OPTIONS (Please check desired sponsorship)

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Goodie Bag Sponsor – \$500 | <input type="checkbox"/> Best Score Team Award Sponsor – \$200 | |
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PAYMENT INFORMATION

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Federal Government Affairs Report



By Roy Littlefield IV

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues on, WMDA/CAR working through SSDA-AT continues to respond to member requests on a daily basis. As we adapt to this new reality, we continue to update members on federal legislation and new regulations.

In June, infrastructure funding discussions were back on the table and SSDA-AT remained heavily involved. During the month, we had a conference call with Terry VanDoren, Policy Advisor, Majority Leader McConnell to discuss state DOT relief and the Highway Bill. Mr. VanDoren was

sympathetic to our concerns and to the threat of industry taxes.

In addition, SSDA-AT also signed onto a letter to President Trump on emergency DOT relief. In the letter, SSDA-AT respectfully urges support of an immediate \$49.95 billion infusion of federal funding for state departments of transportation (DOTs) as the administration and Congress work on the next COVID-19 response legislation.

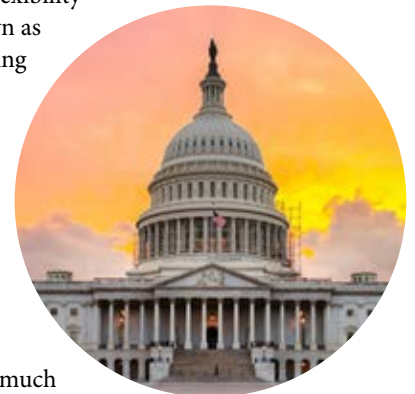
Providing state DOTs with an immediate infusion of funding is not unlike action taken in prior COVID-19 response legislation, which compensated aviation, transit, and passenger rail sectors for reductions in ridership and revenue. This urgently needed funding will prevent disruptions to planned transportation projects and allow state DOT employees and transportation construction workers essential to planning and delivering these projects to remain on the job. This action to preserve core state DOT capabilities is absolutely critical in order for states to carry out a robust, bipartisan, and long-term surface transportation legislation later this year that can serve as our national platform for economic recovery and growth.

At the beginning of the month, SSDA-AT supported legislation to fix the PPP loan program passed. The bill, called the Paycheck Protection Flexibility Act, would ease restrictions on the popular program, known as PPP. It comes after the program was scrutinized for providing aid to unintended recipients, such as large publicly traded companies, and many businesses around the country complained that they either could not tap into loans or did not receive adequate funds to keep their businesses afloat and their employees on the payroll.

Under the bill, businesses would have more time to use their loan money beyond the initial eight-week timeline - which some local businesses that are prohibited from opening their doors have said did not work for them - and still qualify for loan forgiveness. It would also expand how much of the money would have to be spent on payroll costs.

There are a numerous pieces of legislation that are a must pass and have looming deadlines in the fall including the National Defense Authorization Act, a surface transportation package, the Water Resources Development Act, and spending bills to keep the government open past September 30th.

SSDA-AT plans to remain involved in the fury of action expected from Congress in the coming months and we will continue to update you. ■



In June, infrastructure funding discussions were back on the table and SSDA-AT remained heavily involved.



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House Introduces “Invest in America Act” to Address Infrastructure

The bill includes \$411 billion in contract authority from the Highway Trust Fund for highway, transit, safety and research programs. \$319 billion is the portion allocated for the Federal-aid highway program under the Federal Highway Administration.



By Roy Littlefield III

On June 3rd, the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee released draft text of a five-year, \$494 billion surface transportation reauthorization bill entitled the “Investing in a New Vision for the Environment and Surface Transportation in America Act” or the “INVEST in America Act.”

The bill includes \$411 billion in contract authority from the Highway Trust Fund for highway, transit, safety and research programs. \$319 billion is the portion allocated for the Federal-aid highway program under the Federal Highway Administration.

WMDA/AT working through SSDA-AT applauds the committee for moving forward with the reauthorization process. The deadline to reauthorize the FAST Act is quickly approaching. We are hopeful that a bipartisan, bicameral process will move forward to ensure a long-term bill will be signed into law before the FAST Act expires. Failure to do so could halt important road and bridge projects and further disrupt America’s economic recovery.

SSDA-AT will work closely with State DOTs and our members as we analyze the bill, identify provisions that present opportunities and challenges, and advocate for policies and funding that increase safety and mobility for the motoring public.

Following the introduction of the bill, Roy IV and I had a zoom meeting with Congressman Rodney Davis (R-IL), Minority Member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and the Ranking Minority Member of the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit.

Congressman Davis sees the bill as a partisan “disaster.” He observed that Committee Democrats introduced the bill and no hearings will be scheduled. Instead, the legislation will go directly to the floor of the House of Representatives for a vote.

The current five year funding for the Highway Trust Fund will expire on September 30, 2020. The new legislation will increase current spending levels by approximately \$80 billion, yet it fails to address what industry taxes would need to be raised or instituted to cover the costs.

House Republicans Committee Members believe that it would be impossible to lobby the bill while legislators are working from home. They believe that Senate Republicans will write their own bill and then differences would have to be worked out in a “conference committee.” Only then would there be a possibility for a negotiated bipartisan bill prior to the September 30 deadline.

SSDA-AT plans to be involved with infrastructure discussions moving forward and we will continue to push back against unfair industry taxes. ■





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