



2017 Key Issues

Open House Policies – HB 760

MAR supports [HB 760](#) that would allow an agent sitting at an open house to discuss other properties with consumers when they are not interested in the open house property and if the agents have the consent of the seller.

STATUS: Passed. Signed by Governor and effective October 1, 2017.

First-Time Homebuyer Savings Account -- HB 230

MAR supports tax free homebuyer savings accounts which help first-time homebuyers. Like a tax-free education account, a tax-free homebuyer savings account would allow first-time homebuyers to deposit money in an investment account without paying state taxes. The interest earned by that account would also be exempt from state taxes if the money is used in the first-time purchase of a Maryland home. If the money is not used for a first-time home purchase, the holder of the account would be subject to the state tax and penalties.

STATUS: Not Passed

Mortgage Forgiveness Tax Relief – HB 1155/SB 267

HB 1155/SB 267 extend Maryland mortgage forgiveness tax relief legislation through 2018. If the federal law is not extended, this legislation will provide some limited relief against state taxes.

STATUS: Passed. Signed by Governor and effective July 1, 2017.

Septic Tanks – HB 281/SB 266

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) passed a regulation to limit the requirement for Best Available Technology (BAT) septic systems to Maryland's Critical Areas (land that is within 1,000 feet of tidally influenced water). Prior to this regulatory change, most new construction outside of Maryland's Critical Areas were mandated to have BAT systems. MAR opposes [HB 281/SB266](#) to reinstate a BAT system requirement for new construction outside of Maryland's Critical Areas.

STATUS: Not Passed

Automatic Fire Sprinklers -- HB 1623/SB 1103

All new residential home construction in Maryland is mandated to have expensive sprinkler systems. MAR supports efforts to ease the impact that this requirement has on housing affordability across the state. The Legislature will be considering [HB 1623](#) and [SB 1103](#) which establish a grant program to assist affordable housing subject to the sprinkler mandate.

STATUS: Not Passed

For more information contact Bill Castelli, Susan Mitchell or Mark Feinroth