



THE WANADA BULLETIN

NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR AND ABOUT FRANCHISED NEW CAR DEALERS IN THE WASHINGTON AREA

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Digital Ad Tax Pass-Thru Ban Among Many Bills Passed in Md.

The Maryland General Assembly adjourned for the year on Monday night, concluding an unprecedented session that saw landmark bills in police reform, COVID-19 financial relief, sports gambling, and voting rights all pass. Among the many bills passed by the Assembly was [SB 787](#), which forbids large tech companies impacted by the state's new digital advertising tax from passing the state's fee onto consumers.

The bill was passed by a large enough margin in both the House and Senate to override a possible veto from Gov. Larry Hogan, similar to how the legislature overrode the governor's rejection of the original tax a couple of months ago. It remains unclear precisely how stringently the state could enforce the provision banning tech firms from passing the tax along to consumers, a point [critics of the tax itself have argued](#).

The General Assembly also passed legislation allowing counties to implement graduated rates for their income taxes. Currently, every county (plus Baltimore city) levies [their own income tax](#) in addition to the state's graduated income tax, but at a flat rate no higher than 3.2 percent. Under [SB 133](#), the top rate would remain at 3.2 percent, but could be adjusted to exclude income at a lower rate.

Given that most of the state's largest counties charge a 3.2 percent tax on all income, this would effectively lead to a tax cut or no change at all for a strong majority of the state's taxpayers. The bill also codified a tax-rate floor of 2.25 percent, which is the flat rate that Worcester County currently levies.

Meanwhile, competing environmental bills ultimately failed, after House and Senate leaders failed to agree on a reconciliation between their competing bills. The more ambitious Senate bill aimed to reduce the state's greenhouse emissions by 60 percent by 2030, while the House's bill supported a 50-percent target; both bills featured higher goals than the current 40-percent reduction. Ultimately, time ran out on the proposals, both of which would have included a mandate to transition the state's vehicle fleet to electric cars.

Early in the session, the Assembly approved the [RELIEF Act](#), a \$1.2 billion package that cut sales taxes for small businesses, increased the state's Earned Income Tax Credit, and provided direct payments to some low-income residents and hard-hit businesses. For more information on the RELIEF Act, [click here](#).

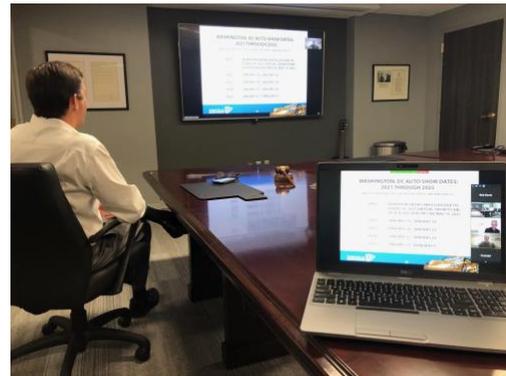
The General Assembly also passed a bill allowing Maryland voters to opt in to a permanent vote-by-mail list, ensuring they'd receive a ballot in the mail for all future state and local elections. The Assembly also set up a framework for legal sports betting, following a statewide ballot amendment that voters passed overwhelmingly last November.

Legislators also abolished mandatory life sentences without the possibility of parole for juveniles, overriding a veto by Gov. Hogan, and approved a statewide use-of-force protocol for police officers, including a requirement that all officers in the state be equipped with body cameras by 2025. The General Assembly also passed [a significant funding increase](#) for MARC and other MTA-managed public transit systems in the Baltimore area.

For more information on key legislation that passed in Annapolis this year, please view a helpful overview from [The Associated Press](#).

WANADA Kicks off Planning for the 2022 D.C. Auto Show

The WANADA staff has begun planning the 2022 Washington, D.C. Auto Show in earnest, holding its first of many virtual meetings with auto manufacturers earlier this week. After the COVID-19 pandemic forced an unprecedented cancellation of the 2021 show, preparation is underway to ensure the show returns in 2022 stronger than ever.



We at WANADA are grateful for the support of our automotive partners, without whom the show would not have been possible to produce over the past eight decades. Show organizers remain in close contact not just with automakers, but with key stakeholders in the D.C. government and beyond, to ensure that next year's show can be held as safely as possible, while ideally retaining all of the interactive and family-friendly features that have made the event such a large attraction for so many years.

The 2022 Washington, D.C. Auto Show will be open to the public from January 21-30, 2022. More information about the show, including WANADA member events, pre-show policy and media programming, and much more, will be announced in the coming months.

Vaccine Eligibility Expanding Rapidly Across the Region

Meeting President Biden's stated goal of making every American adult eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine by the end of this month, both Virginia and Maryland have dramatically expanded eligibility in their states. Maryland has progressed rapidly into their [Stage Three](#), allowing all adults 16 or older to receive a vaccine.

While certain pharmacies and local health clinics may have increased restrictions for the time-being, anyone is eligible to register to receive a vaccine in Maryland at one of the state-run or FEMA-managed mass vaccination sites. There is no residency requirement in Maryland for

vaccinations, and in fact many D.C. leaders have encouraged city residents to travel across state lines to get their shots more expeditiously.

Similarly, Loudoun County and nearly all of Virginia has [opened eligibility to all adults](#), without a residency requirement. The rest of Northern Virginia will [open eligibility to all adults](#) next Sunday, and essential transportation workers across the commonwealth are already eligible for vaccination.

Anyone who wishes to get vaccinated in Virginia should register through the state's vaccine [sign-up page](#), if they have not already. In Maryland, you can register through the statewide portal, or find another vaccination location, [at this link](#). District residents can register for the vaccine [at this link](#).

Reminder: Save the Date for the WANADA Open on June 14

One of WANADA's flagship member events, the WANADA Open, will be making its return on June 14 following a year off due to the pandemic. The event will be held at the Trump National Golf Club in Sterling, and golfers will tee off at 12 p.m.

Please stay tuned for additional information on how to register for the golf tournament, along with further details on the day's programming lineup. We at WANADA are thrilled to be able to gather again after more than a year without association events; we hope to see you there!

If you have any questions about the 2021 WANADA Open, please contact Kathy Teich at kt@wanada.org. If you have any questions about sponsorships for the event, please email Bob Storin at rs@wanada.org.

In Memoriam: John Koons, Jr.

WANADA is sad to announce that John Koons, Jr., a long-time dealer in this area who sold several of his dealerships to his brother James Koons in the 1990s, passed away earlier this month.

According to his family, there are currently plans for a memorial service to be held in June. The family has also requested that, if you wish to honor Mr. Koons with a charitable donation, you may do so by donating to Shriners Hospitals for Children in his name.

All of us at WANADA express our sincerest condolences to John Koons, Jr.'s family, friends, and all those who knew him during his distinguished life.

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