

Open Work Session

February 5, 2019

Letters of Support:

- **House Bill 197-Bed and Breakfast License**
- **House Bill 198-Basket of Cheer Program**
- **House Bill 199-Sunday Deer Hunting**
- **House Bill 200-Sale and Use Tax Exemption – Aircraft Parts and Equipment**
- **Eviction Procedures for Wicomico County**

Mr. Cannon said there are letters of support for four Bills that he thinks Council should be aware of at this time, but the only one Council may need a little more information on is the one in reference to eviction procedures in Wicomico County. He then asked if anyone has any questions on any of the five Bills, to which Mr. Holloway responded, he has something to add on.

Mr. Holloway suggested Council needs to write six letters. He explained, the Chamber of Commerce sent a request that people oppose the increase in the minimum wage. He said he thinks increasing the minimum wage would be very detrimental to the County, and employment in the County, and he wonders whether Council wants to get into sending a letter of opposition to that. Mr. Kilmer said he remembers a couple of years ago when this was being discussed, and Mr. Strausburg, actually, had figures on how it would affect Wicomico County because of the pay scale in Wicomico County, so it would be interesting to know that. He said, if Council is going to write a letter like that, they should get a cost estimate for the County. He clarified, he is not opposed to Mr. Holloway's idea, and he thinks it would be helpful, to which Mr. Holloway responded, the figures Mr. Strausburg had were just for County employees. Mr. Kilmer clarified, they can talk about the economic impact, but, for County Government, it would be good to have those numbers to be able to say they have "X" amount of dollars they are looking at from this year going forward. He said, if they are going to do that, maybe they should wait and get that information. Mr. Cannon said, in order to consider it, and he does not know what their timeframe might be because, usually, it is within two days when talking about State Legislation, but he thinks they would have to have some type of information from the Chamber of Commerce, information from SWED (Salisbury Wicomico Economic Development), and maybe even information from Beacon because they want to look at what the impact is going to be on businesses. He said he thinks they also need to make sure they are evaluating what the benefit might be to the average person in Wicomico County should this come into play. He clarified, he is not advocating for it at all, but it could be that they have to take a balanced approach and say whether it is going to be great, and weigh the pros and cons of this. He said maybe Beacon can help them with that evaluation because he is sure this is not the first time they have evaluated the impact of minimum wage in Wicomico County, so they will get those three resources. Mr. Kilmer pointed out that what they are talking about tonight are local Bills, to which Mr. Holloway responded, he just brought it up because they received that email from the Chamber.

Mr. Kilmer said, to Mr. Cannon's point, they usually want these letters soon to get the process moving, to which Mr. Cannon responded, they are asking for these letters of support now. Mr. Kilmer asked, if Council does not sign on, do these Bills, essentially, go nowhere, to which Mr. Cannon responded, there is a good chance they are going to go through. Mr. McCain clarified, they are moving forward whether Council signs on or not.

Mr. Cannon asked if Council is okay with these letters of support, to which Mr. McCain responded, he is okay with it, but he just does not want it to be a precedent. He explained, he is always a little hesitant about providing letters of support with State Bills because it can be a slippery slope sometimes, and they

have had this discussion before on previous Councils. He said these are somewhat obvious Bills that he thinks are pretty easy to support from a local level, and he is pretty comfortable with them, but there will, certainly, be other Bills that will not be as easy to support as these are.

Mr. Hastings said he has served as the Legislative Assistant to the Chair of the Education Department of Public Affairs Committee for a couple of years now, and a lot of times Counties will send a letter of support, but, by the time they do so, the Bill had already been amended and changed, and it did not reflect what they really wanted it to be. He said they always have to be careful in those types of situations because it can change quite quickly. Mr. Cannon said what Mr. Hastings is suggesting is that any letter of support should probably emphasize that they support this as written without amendments, or something to that affect. Mr. Taylor suggested they could just say "as introduced."


Mr. Cannon asked if there was a consensus regarding sending the letters being discussed, to which there was. There was no further discussion.



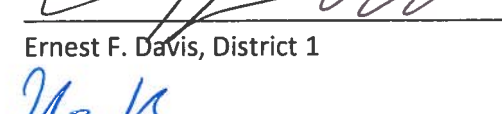
John T. Cannon, President



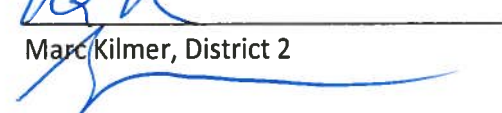
Larry W. Dodd, Vice President, District 3



Ernest F. Davis, District 1



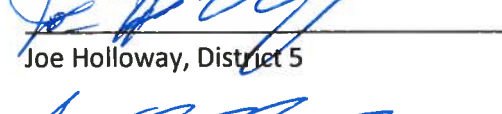
Marc Kilmer, District 2



Josh Hastings, District 4



Joe Holloway, District 5



William R. McCain, At-Large



Laura Hurley, Council Administrator