



# POSITION STATEMENT

**PRESENTED TO THE  
BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL  
WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE**

**COUNCIL BILL 21-0118**

**AREA OF SPECIAL SIGN CONTROL – DESIGNATION – NORTH HARBOR**

**October 12, 2021**

**DONALD C. FRY  
PRESIDENT & CEO  
GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE**

**Council Bill 21-0118**, entitled **Area of Special Sign Control – Designation – North Harbor** would designate an Area of Special Sign Control for certain properties in the North Harbor area of downtown Baltimore. The North Harbor Area would consist of the area bounded, with some variation and exceptions, by Howard Street on the west, Baltimore Street on the north, President Street on the east, and Pratt Street on the south.

This designation is the first of a two-step process for approval of the North Harbor Area of Special Sign Control. First, the designation of an area and its boundaries requires the recommendation of the Planning Commission and then approval of the City Council. Once the designation has been made, a Signage Plan can be developed for the designated area and must be approved by the Planning Commission.

The Downtown Partnership of Baltimore (DPOB) submitted the application for designation of this Area of Special Sign Control, and DPOB officials have shared their vision for the Signage Plan. While the plan cannot officially be submitted until after Council Bill 21-0118 goes into effect, the Downtown Partnership has suggested that video and digital signage could help bring new energy into the downtown business district, as well as provide locally owned minority and women small businesses access to increased signage options. The plan would also bring additional lighting to downtown and provide a better pedestrian experience.

The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) is strongly in support of the designation of the North Harbor Area of Special Sign Control. Increased lighting in the area will improve public safety, and the new signage options will allow property owners to benefit from a new and innovative revenue stream, at a time when so many are still struggling from high vacancy rates resulting from the COVID-19 recession.

For these reasons, the GBC respectfully requests a favorable report on Council Bill 21-0118.

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## **ABOUT THE GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE (GBC)**

*The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC), a regional business advocacy organization, focuses on issues related to economic growth, business competitiveness, and job creation. Since its inception the GBC has advocated for policies directed at creating an effective and reliable transportation system, increasing the quality of our school system, improving public safety, encouraging business growth and entrepreneurship, and expanding access to workforce training and job opportunities. The GBC is an advocate on behalf of business interests and opposes legislative and regulatory efforts that impose unreasonable burdens on business and its operations.*

**GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE**

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