Energy Efficiency Assistance

Draft regulations are being issued this month for the Jane E. Lawton Conservation Loan Program (http://energy.maryland.gov/incentives/state-local/janeelawton.asp) which will make loans repayable from energy savings available to governments, nonprofits and others for energy conserving improvements to facilities. Substantial funding for the program will be available in the next few months. We will be posting information on how to apply as it becomes available. Contact us, or David Cronin, Assistant Director of the Maryland Energy Administration for more information (410.260.7543)

State Budget and Tax

Driven by the national recession, state revenue problems are creating disastrous budget problems around the nation. On December 16 (just in time for the holidays!) new Maryland revenue estimates show that despite budget cuts of this and the last several years, there is still a $400 million gap in the current year, and more than a $1.8 billion shortfall for next year. For what you can do (Hint - first call your members of congress for budget help in a stimulus package) go to our Legislative Action Center at http://capwiz.com/mdnonprofit

For current information on the revenue and budget problems, and on developments with the budget the governor will propose for next year, check the Maryland Budget and Tax Policy Institute website at www.marylandpolicy.org.

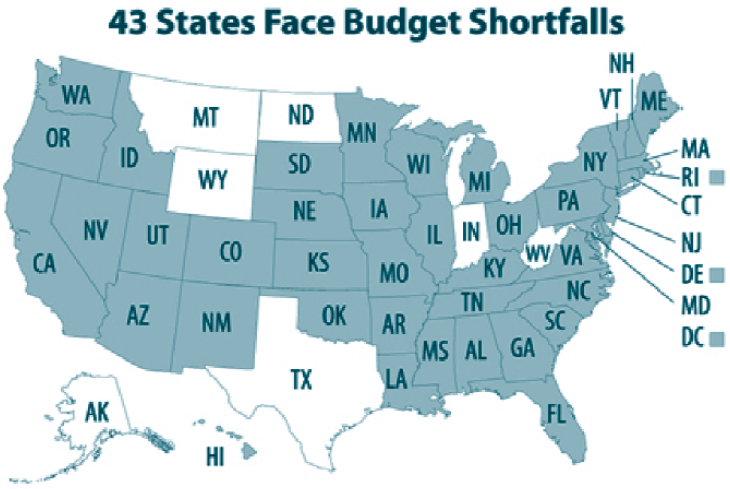
Contact us if you want to be part of efforts to change state fiscal policy.

Maryland Budget and Tax Policy Institute

New Foundations

The Maryland Budget and Tax Policy Institute is proud to add two new foundations to our community of funders.

We gratefully acknowledge a new grant from the Fund for Change in Baltimore for general operating support. General support grants are very valuable to us because they allow us to continue our core functions of research, public education and advocacy.



We also have a new project grant from the Stoneman Family Foundation that will allow us to explore some new formats for our work. In partnership with Wide Angle Youth Media, we will be sponsoring a competition for young video producers to produce web-videos on state public policy issues. The winners will receive a cash prize, and the winning videos will be posted on our website, following a public premiere.

Also as part of the Stoneman Foundation's grant, we will be working with faculty and students at the University of Baltimore's School of Information Arts and Technologies to produce an interactive simulation computer game related to the state budget.

Both of these projects will be taking shape over the course of the year.
Contact us at mbtpi@mdnonprofits.org for more information about these exciting projects.

Budget Shortfalls

In January, a new administration and a new Congress take office in Washington, and the Maryland General Assembly convenes in Annapolis to face another budget shortfall.

Maryland is one of 41 states with projected budget shortfalls, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. The total 2010 state budget gaps will likely be about $100 billion, based on the rate at which states' revenue bases are deteriorating and the history of prior recessions. To keep pace with the cost of services, state revenues must grow. But overall revenues last year were essentially flat and are weakening dramatically this year. Sales taxes are the hardest hit so far, reflecting a fall in both personal consumption and business purchases. But income taxes and other taxes are also falling. Recent stock market declines and continued job losses will depress revenues further.

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities 12/10/08

Employers are reducing jobs and cutting back on employer-provided health coverage. As a result, more families are turning to programs like Medicaid, which provides health coverage to low- and moderate-income families and is jointly funded by Washington and the states.
Maryland's situation reflects the national pattern. Check out the Institute's website at www.marylandpolicy.org for the latest details on Maryland's new budget challenge.