

NOZZLE & WRENCH



CAR
Council of Automotive Repair
A Division of the AAAA

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- >> Accelerate Profits While Making a Difference
- >> Right to Repair Update
- >> Take Advantage of WOTC

In total, 294 additional measures will take effect without signature...

KIRK'S CORNER

Maryland Governor Larry Hogan Announced Additional Legislative Actions



By Kirk Mccauley,
Director Of Member
Relations &
Government Affairs

bill [HB01179](#) is one of those 294 bills that were passed with no signature. On October 1, 2022, Maryland Lottery agents will get a boost on sales commission from 5½% to 6% of sales. This increase over the course of a year will add up to a significant amount.

This was an uphill battle from the start and over the span of a legislative session HB1179 was passed by the house, passed by the senate but cut to a ¼% increase. The bill had to go back to the house to decide if house would concur with the senate version and time was running out with only a few days left in session. House sent it back to the senate refusing to concur on change. Honestly, I thought the bill was dead and our efforts for naught. On last day of session at the last minute (11:59) Senator Guzzone walked up to senate president on podium with HB1179, concurring with house and

Legislation taking effect without signature. In total, 294 additional measures will take effect without signature in accordance with Article II, Section 17(c) of the Maryland Constitution:

- A complete list of House bills that will take effect without signature is available [here](#).
- A complete list of Senate bills that will take effect without signature available [here](#).
- Maryland Lottery agents



Continues on page 4

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

KIRK'S KORNER

Maryland Governor Larry Hogan Announced Additional Legislative Actions Cover

CAR TALK

Accelerate Profits While Making a Difference. 8

NEWS FROM WASHINGTON

Legislative Update: Right to Repair Update 14

Editorial: Take Advantage of WOTC 18

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

Are You Utilizing Instagram as a Sales Resource? 12

WMDA/CAR Endorsed Membership Benefits & Service Providers 20

ADVERTISERS' INDEX

Carroll Motor Fuels 15

CMR Insurance Agency LLC/Erie Insurance 5

Parts Authority Inside front cover

Petroleum Marketing Group 9

Spigler Petroleum Equipment, LLC 10

The Wills Group Inside back cover

WMDA PAC Back cover

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*Sometimes
all the emails
and phone
calls members
compose
do make a
difference...*

Continued from page 1

Sen president Ferguson called for the last vote of 2022 session and HB1179 passed with full ½% restored. WMDA/CAR sent an alert out March 24, asking lottery agents to contact their senators and I would like to think it made a big difference. Sometimes all the emails and phone calls members compose do make a difference and I think this was one of those times.

Governor and Comptroller Playing Politics with Motor Fuel Taxes

Governor Hogan has sent a letter to Comptroller Peter Franchot asking him to stop the gas tax hike increase. The governor knows full well the Comptroller has no powers to override a bill that legislators passed in 2013. Comptroller Franchot has asked the Governor to do the same also knowing the current Governor cannot change the law that Governor O'Malley signed in 2013. The only option the Governor has would be to declare a state of emergency and delay collection by executive order. I think that would be stretching Executive power by calling a gas tax hike an emergency. The Comptroller has said the increase will be about .0660. The official price chart has not been published yet.

The only way other than executive order is for senate president and house speaker to call a special session and both

have already said no to that. As politics go that could change.

It seems like the campaign season is in full swing and finger pointing is starting well before the November elections. The finger in this example is pointing directly at the senate and house.

Delaware

Delaware Governor Carney did sign the Family and medical leave bill into law [SS2 to SB1](#)

DE plastic implements and polystyrene containers is out of committee and we are evaluating now. <https://legis.delaware.gov/BillDetail/109523> DE legislation is in recess until June 7th.

District of Columbia

D.C. was supposed to vote on the entire budget bill on May 24 but put off some of the items and a final vote until next legislative meeting on June 7th. Fate of Flavored tobacco and flavored EDS hang on funding vote. I will keep you updated and we have

done everything we can along with members to tell council why this would be bad for small business.

D.C. Councils Committee on Environment and Transportation has a bill in on plastic bags and plastic film you wrap food in. Stores that use plastic bags would have to set up a recycling receptacle. I sent a letter asking for clarifications and questioning the sanitary aspect of collecting plastic film that had been wrapped around fresh hamburger or other foods and putting that in a convenience store that didn't even sell the product.

Fuel Thieves

The recent diesel thefts in the Millersville area were from Gilbarco pumps, and since there was no sign of tampering or forced entry, a key must have been used. Homemade device that by-passes pulsar and allows continuous flow of fuel has been found when thieves have been caught. When stoage tanks are



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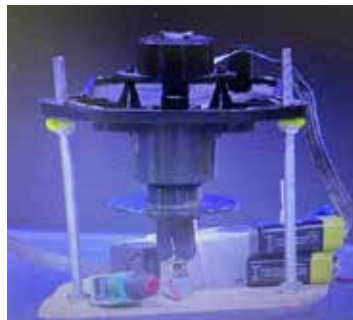
full, they remove device, relock the pump and drive away.

With gas & diesel prices at record highs we can expect more of this. Make sure your pump locks are upgraded, eliminate the default key they came with, and use safety tape on doors. Underground storage tanks are a target for large volume theft and should be monitored. Camera systems of quality and employee awareness is the best defense along with checking pump security measures every shift. This not going away and will surely get worse as prices escalate. Trucks will block cashiers view, normally late at night when only one or two employees working to steal from pumps or USTs. Stations that are closed at night are a prime target. If you cannot block your USTs in some manner when closed, your only defense is lighting and cameras.

Security tape and dispenser door keys are also important in credit card & debit card security. Devices put inside pumps can send data directly to a laptop or phone, with debit card info being crime of choice. This can also be costly from a liability view.

Visit www.wmda.net to see security alerts from Gilbarco and Dover solutions. This by-pass on Gilbarco pumps is most likely what happened on 3 thefts in Millersville.

Please be aware that there are handmade devices being inserted into dispensers by organized gangs across various regions, allowing them to pay pennies on a gallon for fuel. Below is an example of a device recently inserted in a dispenser to steal diesel fuel. Please keep me advised of new incidents. We can advise members of areas, tactics and devices being used.



Credit Card Fees

We are all aware that credit card fees are 12 cents a gallon on average or more at \$5.00 dollars a gallon. You continuously need to be adding that into your cost depending on your mix of branded vs non-branded users and cash vs credit. You cannot pay your expenses, employees and yourself without evaluating costs constantly. Pool margins are important, do them daily. ■



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Accelerate Profits While Making a Difference



By Mick Carbo
Carbo Coaching

Back in October of 2007 I was twenty seven years old and thought I had everything I wanted. I was married with three kids, had two businesses making great money, owned my home, and had the freedom to take vacations. Life was good.

That was also the month I lost everything I had financially and needed to move my family into my mother's basement. Ouch. Needless to say, this was a very dark and difficult time for me. I got depressed, anxious, suicidal, and was beating myself up with almost every thought.

It felt like my life was over and that I was the worst person on the planet. At the time I thought this was the worst thing that ever happened to me, but now in retrospect, I believe it was the biggest gift I ever received. The key was something I didn't expect, and without that key, my door may have been closed forever. Literally.

If I was trying to be a great sales copywriter here, I'd tell you to keep reading to the end of this article and I'd share with you what the key is. Instead, I'm going to give you the goods right now. The key is I did the hard work to discover what was actually in my way.

I researched, I studied, I read books, attended seminars, listened to motivational speakers, hired coaches and consultants and sought out mentors. I used all of these support structures to look at all my shortcomings square in the face and decided to do something about it.

That's when I decided to make business leadership coaching my career. The work I had done on myself over those trying years transformed my life for the better. I had a more empowering relationship with myself as a man, a husband, a father, a business owner and a leader. This type of work became who I am and I knew I needed to create a business that allowed me to give this gift to other people who found themselves in a similar place. I knew I could make a difference.

I chose to focus my work on businesses with a skilled labor workforce. My first business was a tile installation company so I'm a blue-collar guy. When I started coaching, I attracted clients who owned businesses in construction, the trades, automotive, logistics, manufacturing, etc.

I chose to focus here because blue collar people are my people. There's also not a whole lot of coaching businesses focused on these industries so I saw a need and a business opportunity. But the real kicker for me was when I found out the following statistic.

With 53.2 suicides per 100,000 workers, construction has among the highest suicide rate of any industry, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), with deaths by suicide five times higher than all construction deaths combined. -From a CDC report.



...At the time I thought this was the worst thing that ever happened to me, but now in retrospect, I believe it was the biggest gift I ever received.



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This is not ok with me. There are several organizations doing great work to combat this epidemic. And we are one of them.

I started getting real curious as to why this is happening. My hunch is that there are mental health issues being experienced by a lot of people in these industries- just like every other industry. I believe that in blue collar industries the stigma around mental health is much more prevalent.

If a worker has issues with depression, anxiety, alcoholism, drug addiction, or other problems at home there isn't usually a place where they feel comfortable talking about it and getting the help they need. The culture is often one where there's an expectation to pull yourself up by your bootstraps and get back to work.

Then there's the fact that people get promoted into leadership positions every day who don't have much, if any, training and experience. Just because someone is a great technician and has been in the industry for a long time doesn't make them good at managing people. Add treatment by a supervisor who lacks soft skills and relationship building expertise to the mental health stuff I mentioned above and you have a recipe for disaster.

Small to mid market construction and other blue collar company owners are good technicians and potentially good business managers, but there's always an opportunity to strengthen leadership skills at every stage of human development. This is true in every industry and is widely

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focused on by business leaders in white collar sectors.

Entrepreneurs, self-employed professionals, and employed workers in technology, healthcare, business services, insurance, and financial services tend to invest resources into human performance, leadership, and culture development. There are articles in every edition of the HBR and plenty of data from organizations like Gallup on leadership and workforce engagement.

The data show that workforce engagement levels are only 33% or less and that costs the US economy alone hundreds of billions of dollars annually. These statistics are across the board and they certainly affect bottom line results.

Companies increase profits by up to 22% by raising levels of engagement. We believe that small to mid market blue collar businesses should focus as much attention on the data as white collar businesses do.

Business leaders, whether they be owners or supervisors, obviously have many jobs. Managing processes and assets, project timelines, marketing, sales, customer service, and day to day operations.

All of the above business strategies and tactics are performed by people, therefore people are a company's most valuable asset. A business leader's most important job then is to manage the energy of their workforce to ensure full engagement.


People don't leave companies, products, or services, they leave people. They leave cultures. Work cultures can have varying levels of toxicity and impact on a company's workforce. There's also varying degrees of visibility, or awareness of, these cultures

making it difficult for leaders to address the root causes of their cultural problems.

Low workforce retention, absenteeism, injury and death from accidents, suicide, and addiction, are all either costly impacts of, or perpetuated by, toxic work cultures. This is a consequence of cultures being led by people who lack training

in transforming how it goes on their teams. Cultures become an environment formed by the relationships of the team members that starts to run by default and goes by unnoticed on many levels. Having an outsourced team of professionals partnering with business leaders to get to the root of the problems adds velocity to creating solutions and value. ■

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Are You Utilizing Instagram as a Sales Resource?

Brought to you by Netdriven

We've all witnessed the explosion of social media, especially over the last couple years.

While social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn began as platforms to share content and maintain digital connections to friends and family, they evolved into avenues to grow your business.

The majority of consumers turn to the internet to shop for new auto parts, tires or repair services. Most businesses have learned to anticipate the digital starting point of the buying journey and have boosted their website presence in response. However, shoppers aren't just googling for automotive services – they're also using social media to find answers. And Instagram is one of their top resources.

The Rise of Instagram

While most small- to mid-sized businesses have a website and Facebook page, not nearly as many have embraced Instagram. The photo-sharing application launched in 2010 and was adopted by 25,000 users on its first day, reaching 1 million in under three months. Today, *1 billion* people use Instagram every month.

Instagram is now a faster-growing platform than Facebook, though its audience is mainly comprised of younger users – millennials and Gen Z. Hootsuite's Global State of Digital 2022 Report shows that more than **60%** of the user base is between the ages of 18 and 34. (For reference, Facebook's largest age group is 35 to 44). Instagram's younger user base makes it a powerful avenue for automotive businesses to connect with the next generation of consumers. Instagram has an easy-to-use interface that creates a visual brand for your business, promoting trust, transparency and engagement with your audience.

In today's digital age, it's important to be able to connect with potential shoppers online. While many younger buyers aren't experienced in vehicle repairs and maintenance, they are very savvy in using the internet to find answers. In fact, **50%** of people use Instagram as a search tool to discover new brands, services and products. But that's not all – **44%** use Instagram *weekly* to shop and make purchases, as reported by Hootsuite.



Instagram Best Practices

In this article, we're going to hone in on tips for Instagram.

Sizing Requirements

Instagram is a photo-centric platform, so graphics need to be top-tier quality. Correctly sizing your images ensures your visuals will be properly centered and appealing. Here are the recommended image sizes:

While social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn began as platforms to share content and maintain digital connections to friends and family, they evolved into avenues to grow your business.



- Width of 1080 pixels (if the image is over 1080 pixels, Instagram will size it down)
- Height between 566 - 1350 pixels (depending on whether the image is landscape or portrait)

Character Limits

While Instagram captions allow up to 2,200 characters (and you'll often see users posting long captions), businesses are encouraged to restrict posts to 125 or fewer characters, especially on advertisements. Your audience is conditioned to scroll through Instagram, often idly, and longer captions are less likely to hold their attention.

For example, let's say that Bob's Wheels is throwing a summer barbecue to demo their new wheel lines. Here's what an optimal Instagram caption could look like:

Come BBQ with @bobswheels 7/9 2-4PM \$9 per guest – all you can eat! Grab a plate and demo our new wheels. Call for details.

The post is informative but to the point and delivers all the

need-to-know information up front. If you need to apply a longer caption, we encourage you to either include the crucial information in the first line or write an attention-grabbing intro that compels the audience to pause and click on the post to read the rest of the message.

Hashtags

Hashtags (#) are used to index keywords so users can easily follow topics that interest them. Plugging in a hashtag links your post to any other Instagram post featuring the same hashtag(s). Some industry-specific hashtags you might use to draw in shoppers could include:

- #autoshop
- #automotiverepair
- #tireandwheel

Is there a such thing as too many hashtags? Yes, but it's not as restrictive as you might think. While Facebook posts should be limited to 1-2 hashtags, Instagram posts can feature up to 30! This doesn't mean you should stuff your caption full of as many

hashtags as you can think up. Hashtag use should be intentional and relevant to your post. Here are two ways to feature more hashtags:

Incorporate them into your copy. *Is your car's #airconditioning ready for summer? Stop by today for an #autotuneup!*

Group hashtags at the base of your post, where they won't bog down your message. You may see other posters include their hashtags several lines below the main message – this earns them all the benefits of keyword indexing without overshadowing the actual post.

The bottom line of Instagram is that if you aren't using it to connect with potential customers and enhance your brand, you could be missing out on quality sales leads and leaving money on the table. You may have concerns about finding the time to commit to another social media platform, and we encourage you to reach out if you find yourself in need of social media support. ■

Right to Repair Update



By Roy Littlefield IV

WMDA/CAR being represented by SSDA-AT

continues to work on right on repair on both the state and federal level.

On the state level, U.S. District Judge Douglas P. Woodlock, the federal judge deciding the fate of the Massachusetts' expanded automotive "right to repair" law is delaying his long-awaited decision for the fifth time. In a court filing Judge Woodlock cited "the resurgence of a demanding criminal trial schedule," the resumption of in-court, nontribal

proceedings, and writing responsibilities in other matters as reasons for delay. Judge Woodlock said he expected to issue a ruling to later than July 1st. SSDA-AT was early supporters of the "Data Access Law." Right to Repair remains a top priority for WMDA/CAR.

On the federal level, SSDA-AT has supported the introduction of H.R. 6570, the Right to Equitable and Professional Auto Industry Repair Act, or the REPAIR Act, in the 117th Congress introduced in the House by Representative Bobby Rush (D-IL). This is the latest chapter in the Right to Repair fight with the vehicle manufacturers, to preserve competition in vehicle repair and maintenance. SSDA-AT has been working on adding co-sponsors to the legislation.

This legislation would preserve consumer access to high quality, affordable vehicle repair by ensuring that vehicle owners and independent repair shops have equal access to repair and maintenance tools and data as car companies and licensed dealerships.

The REPAIR Act will update existing laws to reflect the modernization of automobiles and the importance of consumer choice in auto repair. The legislation is written to foster a competitive environment for vehicle repair while prioritizing cybersecurity and safety for vehicle systems.

The vehicle manufacturers and car dealers have about 250 lobbyists working for them – that's why a strong grassroots initiative is the only way we win in this scenario. Urge your lawmakers to put vehicle owners' interests first by supporting Right to Repair legislation for the tire and auto repair industry.

Urge your lawmakers to put vehicle owners' interests first by supporting Right to Repair legislation for the auto repair industry.

As vehicle technology has advanced, new barriers to a competitive repair market have emerged. It's essential for American motorists that we break



This is the latest chapter in the Right to Repair fight with the vehicle manufacturers, to preserve competition in vehicle repair and maintenance.

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS



down barriers to vehicle repair, and that owners and their trusted independent repair shops have access to the critical information, tools, and parts needed to keep their cars or trucks on the road safer, longer.

Modern cars and trucks contain advanced technology that monitors or controls virtually every function of the vehicle including: brakes, steering, air bags, fuel delivery, ignition, lubrication, theft prevention, emission controls and soon, tire pressure. Car and truck owners, as well as the facilities that repair these vehicles need full access to the information, parts and tools necessary to accurately diagnose, repair or re-program these systems.

SSDA-AT Believes Right to Repair Legislation Should:

- Protect a pro-consumer and competitive motor vehicle repair market;
- Provide independent repair shops with the rights to critical information, tools,



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FOLLOW YOUR HEART

Risk factors for cardiovascular disease and stroke – obesity, high blood pressure and diabetes – negatively impact your cognitive health.



BREAK A SWEAT

Engage in regular cardiovascular exercise that elevates heart rate and increases blood flow. Studies have found that physical activity reduces risk of cognitive decline.



STUMP YOURSELF

Challenge your mind. Build a piece of furniture. Play games of strategy, like bridge.



HEADS UP!

Brain injury can raise risk of cognitive decline and dementia. Wear a seat belt and use a helmet when playing contact sports or riding a bike.

Growing evidence indicates that people can reduce their risk of cognitive decline by adopting key lifestyle habits. When possible, combine these habits to achieve maximum benefit for the brain and body.

BUDDY UP

Staying socially engaged may support brain health. Find ways to be part of your local community or share activities with friends and family.



TAKE CARE OF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

Some studies link depression with cognitive decline, so seek treatment if you have depression, anxiety or stress.



CATCH SOME ZZZ'S

Not getting enough sleep may result in problems with memory and thinking.



FUEL UP RIGHT

Eat a balanced diet that is higher in vegetables and fruit to help reduce the risk of cognitive decline.



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and equipment needed to repair modern cars and trucks; and

- Task the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration with developing cybersecurity standards and guidelines to protect vehicle data and systems when repair and maintenance data is accessed by vehicle owners or their designees.

SSDA-AT welcomes the opportunity to work with NHTSA and other agencies to demonstrate to the Agency, Congress, and other parties that the independent aftermarket can access vehicle data safely and securely. Technology that ensures the cybersecure access to data for owners and their authorized repair shops already exists, and the independent aftermarket continues to lead and innovate on this front.

SSDA-AT will support the REPAIR Act and continue to explore other options for federal legislation that would support the motor vehicle owner's right to repair.

Right to repair remains a top priority for WMDA/CAR members and a national law would provide for much needed clarity and direction in vehicle repair. ■

10 warning signs of alzheimer's disease

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10 SIGNS
EARLY DETECTION MATTERS

- 1 Memory loss that disrupts daily life
- 2 Challenges in planning or solving problems
- 3 Difficulty completing familiar tasks
- 4 Confusion with time or place
- 5 Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships
- 6 New problems with words in speaking or writing
- 7 Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps
- 8 Decreased or poor judgment
- 9 Withdrawal from work or social activities
- 10 Changes in mood and personality

If you or someone you know experience any of these warning signs, please see a doctor.
For more information, call 800.272.3900 or visit alz.org/10signs.

alzheimer's association

Take Advantage of WOTC



By Roy Littlefield III

With many businesses facing a tight job market, the Internal Revenue Service reminds employers to check out a valuable tax credit available for hiring long-term unemployment recipients and other groups of workers facing significant barriers to employment.

For any service station or repair shop now hiring, the Work Opportunity Tax Credit may help.

What is the WOTC?

This long-standing tax benefit encourages employers to hire workers certified as members of any of ten targeted groups facing barriers to employment.

With millions of Americans out of work at one time or another since the pandemic began, the IRS notes that one of these targeted groups is long-term unemployment recipients who have been unemployed for at least 27 consecutive weeks and received state or federal unemployment benefits during part or all of that time.

The WOTC is available for wages paid to certain individuals who begin work on or before Dec. 31, 2025.

The other groups include certain veterans and recipients of various kinds of public assistance, among others. Specifically, the 10 groups are:

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients,
- Unemployed veterans, including disabled veterans,
- Formerly incarcerated individuals,
- Designated community residents living in Empowerment Zones or Rural Renewal Counties,
- Vocational rehabilitation referrals,
- Summer youth employees living in Empowerment Zones,
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients,
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients,
- Long-term family assistance recipients and
- Long-term unemployment recipients.

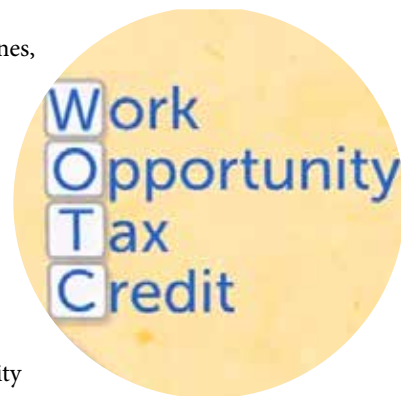
Qualifying for the credit

To qualify for the credit, an employer must first request certification by submitting IRS Form 8850, Pre-screening Notice and Certification Request for the Work Opportunity Credit, to their state workforce agency (SWA).

It must be submitted to the SWA within 28 days after the eligible worker begins work. Employers should not submit Form 8850 to the IRS.

Helping new hires

Since many new hires may lack workplace experience, one way that employers can help these workers get off to a good start is to make sure they have the right amount of tax



This long-standing tax benefit encourages employers to hire workers certified as members of any of ten targeted groups facing barriers to employment.



taken out of their pay.

A great way to do that is to encourage them to use the Tax Withholding Estimator, a free online tool available on IRS.gov.

By filling in a few key pieces of information, an employee can use the Tax Withholding Estimator to estimate the right amount of tax to have taken out of their pay. Among other things, this online tool can help them see how withholding affects their take-home pay, expected refund or tax due.

The Tax Withholding Estimator will also help them correctly fill out Form W-4, Employee's Withholding Certificate. The employee gives this form to their employer, not the IRS.

Once an employee has been on the payroll for a while, they can also use this tool to update their

withholding to reflect important life changes, such as getting married, getting divorced or having a child.

The Tax Withholding Estimator can also be a useful tool for existing employees by helping them avoid a year-end tax surprise. For more information, visit [IRS.gov/Withholding](https://www.irs.gov/Withholding).

Claiming the credit

Eligible businesses then claim the WOTC on their federal income tax return. It is generally based on wages paid to eligible workers during the first year of employment. This is a one-time credit for each new hire and an employer cannot claim the WOTC for employees who are rehired.

The credit is first figured on Form 5884, Work Opportunity Credit, and then claimed on Form

3800, General Business Credit.

Though the credit is not available to tax-exempt organizations for most groups of new hires, a special rule allows them to claim the WOTC for hiring qualified veterans.

These organizations claim the credit against payroll taxes on Form 5884-C, Work Opportunity Credit for Qualified Tax Exempt Organizations Hiring Qualified Veterans.

Additionally, see the LB&I and SB/SE Joint Directive on the WOTC the IRS issued to help certain employers affected by extended delays in the WOTC certification process.

For more information about the Work Opportunity Tax Credit, visit [IRS.gov/WOTC](https://www.irs.gov/WOTC). ■

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ELECTION 2022: **WMDA/CAR PAC needs funds to Participate**

Governor, Attorney General and Comptroller, along with delegates and senators are up for election in Maryland.

- ▶ **Ban on menthol cigarettes** in District of Columbia means there will be copycat bills in Maryland and Delaware this year.
- ▶ California **bans gas powered cars** by 2035, will MD, DE, or DC be next?
- ▶ Baltimore council members want to **ban new service stations** in the city, ban plastics, Styrofoam & sugary drinks. They have shut down many retailers with pad locks on doors, blaming business for crime. Police are telling our retailers you are on your own, hire security guards. They need to focus on crime, not plastic bags. The absurdity of actions like this underscores the need for new legislators.
- ▶ Labor and employee bills in all three jurisdictions would add thousands of dollars in **payroll cost** per year. While we have been successful in stopping or amending most bills, they will all be back this year.
- ▶ **Right to Repair** – New cars manufactured are installing devices in vehicles that send information over wireless networks to dealerships automatically.

As absurd as some of these bills are, they are real and affect all our members. These issues will be or already are in the legislative process. We need legislators who support retail business, do not be on the side lines.

Support your PAC and PROTECT your business.

We suggest \$150 per location however, any amount is welcome.

Please send contributions to: WMDAPAC 1532 Pointer Ridge Place, Suite F Bowie, MD 20716

Your fellow business owners and PAC officers,

Rick Agoris, *PAC Chairman*

Riaz Ahmad, *PAC Treasurer*

