



GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE

Regional business leaders creating a better tomorrow...today.

GBC In The News: April - May 2019

Media highlights of the GBC in April and May.

The Greater Baltimore Committee frequently receives requests from local and national media outlets to provide insight, comment or perspective on a pressing topic or issue. Reporters, editors and producers solicit our input because the GBC provides the unique private sector angle and enjoys a reputation for providing informed and well thought out perspectives on important issues facing our state, region and city.

Additionally, as part of the effort to be an influential voice in the region, I also publish regular commentaries in the *Baltimore Business Journal* and *The Daily Record*, on WBAL News Radio 1090 and in other media outlets.

To ensure that you and other members are kept informed of the GBC's presence in the media, we are pleased to provide you with this edition of GBC In The News.

As always, I welcome your feedback and questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Don Fry'.

Donald C. Fry
President & CEO

April 2019

Don Fry Commentaries

April 29 WBAL News Radio 1090: Baltimore City Government Reform

Safeguards are needed to ensure that the city's residents and reputation are spared from another painful debacle like the one unfolding now. Change that improves the operation of government and better serves the citizens is appropriate. But exercising the right degree of thoughtful and deliberative change is the best approach to ensure a stable, responsive and productive city government. [Listen to the commentary.](#)

April 18 The Daily Record: 5G Technology

With the 2019 Maryland General Assembly session completed and 5G legislation on hold once again, the parties responsible for finding a suitable resolution will be on the hot seat. Will they find common ground to propose legislation in 2020 that will pave the way for the deployment of 5G networks in Maryland and in doing so attract the new investment in wireless infrastructure,

increased entrepreneurial activity and additional jobs? Or will they let Maryland become yet another example of the fast innovators outpacing the glacial regulators? [Read the commentary.](#)

GBC Events

April 9 Baltimore Business Journal: Newsmaker Breakfast with Councilman Eric Costello

City Councilman Eric Costello visited the Greater Baltimore Committee Tuesday morning to discuss the city budget process with local business leaders. But unsurprisingly, he ended up facing questions about the turmoil surrounding Mayor Catherine Pugh and questionable deals she made both as mayor and previously a state senator. [Read the article.](#)

April 9 The Daily Record: Newsmaker Breakfast with Councilman Eric Costello

"No charter amendments are going to get a hearing until next summer. We don't need to be distracted by that. We've got enough work on our hands right now," Costello said in response to an audience members question at the Greater Baltimore Committee's Newsmaker Breakfast on Tuesday. [Read the article.](#)

Additional Media Coverage

April 26 The Washington Post: Baltimore's image

First, by many measures, our city and region are thriving. The Baltimore area is home to more than a dozen institutions of higher education. Johns Hopkins University and the University of Maryland, Baltimore bring billions of federal research dollars to the city. In fact, Johns Hopkins leads all U.S. universities in research spending for the 38th year in a row. And Baltimore is a global hub for medicine, biotech and cybersecurity. University of Maryland, Baltimore County has graduated more African American students who have gone on to earn advanced degrees than any other college in the country. Want to know more about our vibrant economic landscape? Just take a look at the Greater Baltimore Committee's 2018 State of the Region Report. [Read the article.](#)

April 12 The Baltimore Sun: GBC Board of Directors calls on Mayor Pugh to Resign

The Greater Baltimore Committee issued a call Friday for Mayor Catherine Pugh to resign, a repudiation of her leadership by the influential group of business and civic leaders who say she no longer has "public trust or moral authority." [Read the article.](#)

April 12 Baltimore Business Journal: GBC Board of Directors calls on Mayor Pugh to Resign

The Greater Baltimore Committee's Board of Directors is calling on Mayor Catherine Pugh to resign, joining a chorus of public officials requesting she leave office amid an ongoing scandal over her business dealings. [Read the article.](#)

April 12 Baltimore Fishbowl: GBC Board of Directors calls on Mayor Pugh to Resign

A few days after city council members and state lawmakers publicly urged Mayor Catherine Pugh to resign, an organization made up of prominent business people, religious leaders and others from around Baltimore has joined the call. The Greater Baltimore Committee announced this afternoon that its Board of Directors has voted to ask Pugh to make an exit from city government. [Read the article.](#)

April 12 The Daily Record: GBC Board of Directors calls on Mayor Pugh to Resign

The Greater Baltimore Committee, a prominent regional business advocacy group, on Friday joined calls for Mayor Catherine Pugh to resign. Its Board of Directors called on Pugh to step down, adding its voice to others, including the Baltimore City Council. Pugh has been accused of ethical violations stemming from the sale of her self-published children's books. [Read the article.](#)

April 12 Fox 45: GBC Board of Directors calls on Mayor Pugh to Resign

Friday, the Greater Baltimore Committee's Board of Directors called on Baltimore Mayor Catherine Pugh to resign. The Board acknowledged Mayor Pugh's current leave of absence for health reasons and expressed its best wishes for a speedy and complete recovery. [Read the article.](#)

April 12 WBAL News Radio 1090: GBC Board of Directors calls on Mayor Pugh to Resign

The Board of Directors of the Greater Baltimore Committee voted Friday to call on on Mayor Catherine Pugh to resign. [Listen to the story.](#)

April 12 WBAL TV 11: GBC Board of Directors calls on Mayor Pugh to Resign

The Greater Baltimore Committee's Board of Directors is calling on Baltimore Mayor Catherine Pugh to resign. This is significant because the mayor has now lost the confidence of the business community. In an unprecedented move, the GBC, which represents 500 business and civil groups and nonprofits, is calling on Pugh to resign. [Watch the coverage.](#)

April 12 WJZ: GBC Board of Directors calls on Mayor Pugh to Resign

The Great Baltimore Committee's Board of Directors called for the resignation of Mayor Catherine Pugh Friday. "The Board acknowledges Mayor Pugh's current leave of absence for health reasons and expressed its best wishes for a speedy and complete recovery," the GBC board said in a statement. "After considerable discussion and thought, the Board determined that Mayor Pugh no longer possesses the public trust or moral authority to lead the city due to concerns regarding the activities that have come to light while she served as a State Senator and as Mayor of the city." [Watch the coverage.](#)

April 7 The Daily Record: House Speaker Michael Busch

Busch possessed leadership qualities that are rarely found today, said Donald C. Fry, President and CEO of the Greater Baltimore Committee. "He was respectful of legislators and advocates with divergent political philosophies and always made them feel that they had a fair chance to express their views," Fry said. "He was always mindful of the importance of the General Assembly as an institution and the importance of maintaining the integrity of the body. Those traits explain how he became the longest-serving speaker of the House in Maryland's history." [Read the article.](#)

May 2019

Don Fry Commentaries

May 17 The Daily Record: The Need for a Visionary Transit Network

For decades, the Maryland Department of Transportation has ignored the transit needs of the Baltimore region while massive investment has occurred in the Washington suburbs. For example, the state of Maryland has committed to the Purple Line, a \$2.4 billion light-rail line under construction between New Carrollton and Bethesda. Meanwhile, the Baltimore region received a \$135 million overhaul of the public bus system operated by the Maryland Transit Administration. [Read the commentary.](#)

GBC Events

May 13 The Baltimore Sun: Former U.S. Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein strikes back at James Comey, calling him 'partisan pundit'

Rod Rosenstein, in his first day of public appearances since ending a stormy tenure as U.S. deputy attorney general, defended his role in President Donald Trump's abrupt firing of former FBI director James Comey, whom he called a "partisan pundit."

Rosenstein's speech Monday night at the Greater Baltimore Committee's Annual Meeting came after Comey - a sharp critic of Trump's - recently criticized Rosenstein in a New York Times Op-Ed for giving a speech quoting the president on the importance of the rule of law. Trump, Comey wrote, "eats your soul in small bites." [Read the article.](#)

May 13 Baltimore Business Journal: Rod Rosenstein defends actions as deputy AG at Baltimore dinner

Former U.S. deputy attorney general Rod Rosenstein defended his character and tried to set the record straight Monday night about his decision to appoint a special counsel to investigate Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election. Rosenstein, whose resignation from the U.S. Department of Justice became effective May 11, took some subtle and not-so-subtle shots at President Donald Trump, former FBI director James Comey and the many pundits who have criticized his actions. The former U.S. attorney for the District of Maryland was the keynote speaker at the Greater Baltimore Committee's Annual Meeting on the same evening

The New York Times reported Attorney General William P. Barr has appointed the top federal prosecutor in Connecticut to investigate the origins of the Russia investigation. [Read the article.](#)

May 13 The Daily Record: Rosenstein strikes back at Comey, addresses UB law grads

On his first day in the ranks of the unemployed, former Deputy Attorney General Rod J. Rosenstein gave the keynote address at the University of Baltimore School of Law's commencement ceremony Monday in which he offered graduates advice on launching their legal careers. Hours later, Rosenstein gave a far different speech before an audience of about 1,000 business, civic and political leaders at the Greater Baltimore Committee's Annual Meeting. He offered a spirited defense of his decision to appoint a special counsel to investigate Russian meddling in the 2016 presidential election and a pointed rebuke of recent criticism he had received from former FBI Director James Comey. [Read the article.](#)

May 13 The Washington Post: Rosenstein: Russia probe justified, closing it wasn't option

Fresh out of his job as deputy attorney general, Rod Rosenstein said Monday that the Justice Department's investigation into Russian election interference was "justified," that he would have never allowed anyone to interfere with it and that closing it had not been an option. He also took aim at former FBI Director James Comey, characterizing him as a "partisan pundit" busy selling books and earning speaking fees. The barbs continued an extraordinary public spat between the two law enforcement officials, coming days after Comey said in a television interview that he didn't view Rosenstein as a person of high character. The speech before a Baltimore advocacy group for business and civic leaders marked Rosenstein's most expansive remarks on the recently concluded probe into Russian election interference and potential coordination between the Trump campaign and Russia. In it, Rosenstein repeatedly distanced himself from President Donald Trump - who has decried the investigation as a hoax and witch hunt - and sought to burnish a legacy for himself as a protector of the Justice Department's independence who tried to do what he thought was right regardless of public criticism. [Read the article.](#)

May 13 CNN: Rosenstein calls Comey a 'partisan pundit' in revealing speech

In his speech before a crowd of nearly 1,000 people at the annual Greater Baltimore Committee dinner, Rosenstein acknowledged the unusual role he played in the drama of Trump's Washington -- as a Republican held up by the left for stewarding the Mueller probe. "People spend a lot of time debating whose side I was on, based on who seemed to benefit the most from any individual decision," Rosenstein said. "But trying to infer partisan affiliation from law enforcement decisions is what you might call a category error. It uses the wrong frame of reference." [Read the article.](#)

May 13 NBC News: Rod Rosenstein calls James Comey a 'partisan pundit'

In remarks prepared for delivery Monday night, former Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein calls James Comey "a partisan pundit" and criticizes him for his recent remarks about Rosenstein. In an op-ed last week in *The New York Times*, Comey asked how Rosenstein could, after the release of the Mueller report, give a speech quoting President Donald Trump on the rule of law and praise the president in his resignation letter. Comey concluded that Trump "eats your soul in small bites." In remarks for a speech Monday night to the Greater Baltimore Committee, Rosenstein says Comey is now "a partisan pundit, selling books and earning speaking fees while speculating about the strength of my character and the fate of my immortal soul. That is disappointing. Speculating about souls is not a job for police and prosecutors. Generally we base our opinions on eyewitness testimony." [Read the article.](#)

May 13 ABC News: Rod Rosenstein defends Russia investigation handling, hits back at James Comey

Just two days after his official departure from the Department of Justice, former Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein mounted an extensive defense of the tumultuous early days of his tenure and his decision to appoint Robert Mueller as special counsel. Rosenstein, in remarks before the Greater Baltimore Committee Annual Meeting, took aim at critics, cable news pundits and former FBI Director James Comey - while mostly sparing President Donald Trump from any direct criticism. "People spend a lot of time debating whose side I was on, based on who seemed to benefit most from any individual decision," Rosenstein said. "That is because partisans evaluate things in terms of the immediate political impact and cable TV pundits fill a lot of time by pretending there is always serious breaking news." [Read the article.](#)

May 13 Fox News: Former Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein speaks at the Great Baltimore Committee Annual Meeting

Rosenstein discusses his actions within the Department of Justice, Former Attorney General Jeff Sessions and the reaction to the sudden firing of James Comey. [Watch the news story.](#)

May 14 The Baltimore Sun: Greater Baltimore Committee honors Scalea and Mohler, launches review of city ethics and arena options

The Greater Baltimore Committee recognized Dr. Thomas Scalea and Donald Mohler with its top awards Monday night at the business and civic group's Annual Meeting. [Read the article.](#)

May 14 Maryland Reporter: Rosenstein Speaks in Baltimore

Rod Rosenstein, in his first day of public appearances since ending a stormy tenure as U.S. deputy attorney general, defended his role in President Donald Trump's abrupt firing of former FBI director James Comey, whom he called a "partisan pundit." Rosenstein's speech Monday night at the Greater Baltimore Committee's Annual Meeting came after Comey - a sharp critic of Trump's - recently criticized Rosenstein in a New York Times op-ed for giving a speech quoting the president on the importance of the rule of law. Trump, Comey wrote, "eats your soul in small bites." [Read the article.](#)

May 14 Maryland Matters: Rosenstein in Baltimore: 'Not Everybody Is Happy With My Decisions'

In some of his first public comments after leaving the Justice Department last week, former Deputy U.S. Attorney General Rod Rosenstein said he made the best decisions he could under difficult circumstances - and revealed more details about the firing of former FBI Director James Comey, who Rosenstein said has become a "political pundit." Before a crowd of 1,000 at an annual Greater Baltimore Committee dinner on Monday night, blocks from the federal courthouse where he served as Maryland's U.S. attorney for more than a decade, Rosenstein said he took a few hits during his tenure atop the Justice Department, but stood by the decisions he made. [Read the article.](#)

May 14 Baltimore Business Journal: Mayor Young, Council President Scott tout city's 'resilience' at Annual GBC Meeting

Baltimore Mayor Bernard C. "Jack" Young and Council President Brandon Scott spoke about the recent changes in city leadership at an annual business dinner Monday night and expressed their belief in the strength of the community to bounce back. The two spoke before a crowd of a thousand local business people and politicians at the Greater Baltimore Committee's Annual Meeting. They called on those in the room to "work together" to lift up Baltimore and correct some of the problems facing the city. [Read the article.](#)

May 14 Fox News: Rosenstein unloads on Comey, says he broke 'bright lines that should never be crossed'

Rod Rosenstein unloaded on former FBI Director James Comey in remarks to the Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) on Monday evening, slamming Comey's turn as a "partisan pundit," reiterating that he deserved to be fired, and faulting him for trampling "bright lines that should never be crossed." Rosenstein formally stepped aside as deputy attorney general two days ago. His speech specifically took aim at Comey's comments earlier this month implying that Rosenstein and Attorney General Bill Barr lacked the "inner strength" to "resist the compromises necessary to survive Mr. Trump." [Read the article.](#)

May 20 Baltimore Snap: GBC Annual Meeting

Check out Baltimore Snap's coverage of the GBC's 64th Annual Meeting on May 13, 2019. [View photos.](#)

Additional Media Coverage

May 2 Baltimore Business Journal: Catherine Pugh resignation

Donald C. Fry, President and CEO of the Greater Baltimore Committee, an influential local business group, said Pugh's decision was in the "best interest of the city." The organization's board of directors had called for Pugh's resignation on April 12. "Her resignation provides Baltimore the opportunity to move forward without the distraction of the ongoing investigations and speculation as to leadership in City Hall. The Greater Baltimore Committee remains committed to supporting Bernard C. "Jack" Young in his new role as mayor and to assist the city to grow, heal and leverage the many positive assets it has going for it." [Read the article.](#)

May 2 The Baltimore Sun: Catherine Pugh resignation

"Catherine Pugh's decision to resign as mayor of Baltimore today is in the best interest of the city," said Donald C. Fry, President and CEO of the Greater Baltimore Committee. Her resignation provides Baltimore the opportunity to move forward without the distraction of the ongoing investigations and speculation as to leadership in City Hall. The Greater Baltimore Committee remains committed to supporting Bernard C. "Jack" Young in his new role as Mayor and to assist the city to grow, heal and leverage the many positive assets it has going for it."

[Read the article.](#)

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Greater Baltimore Committee | 410-727-2820 | www.gbc.org
111 S. Calvert Street, Suite 1700
Baltimore, MD 21202