



MARYLAND — At a time when cybersecurity breaches seem rampant, Maryland's legislature has passed legislation to help small businesses avoid them. In June, the Cybersecurity Incentive Tax Credit went into effect for Maryland companies with fewer than 50 employees. The law allows eligible small businesses that buy cybersecurity products or services from approved providers to claim a state income tax credit that equals 50 percent of the cost, up to \$50,000. The program is administered through the Maryland Department of Commerce.



NORTH CAROLINA — The Publix supermarket chain announced in October that it will build a \$400 million, 1.8-million-square-foot distribution center in Greensboro, which will be its northernmost distribution center. The center, which is scheduled to open in 2022, is expected to employ 1,000 people by 2025 with average annual salaries of \$44,000. Greensboro was chosen over other locations thanks to incentives, including tax breaks and training programs.



SOUTH CAROLINA — It will soon be easier to hop across the pond from the Lowcountry. British Airways announced in October that it will start two nonstop flights per week between Charleston and London in April 2019. South Carolina officials estimate the economic impact of the new route could be more than \$20 million per year due to job creation and increased tourism. Officials also hope it will help draw more international companies to the state.



VIRGINIA — Less than a year after Facebook announced it would invest \$1 billion in a new data center in Henrico County, the company said in September that it will invest an additional \$750 million and build three additional buildings, bringing the total number of buildings to five. Facebook says the expansion will bring more than 200 permanent full-time jobs and 1,500 construction jobs. Construction is already underway on the two initial buildings and a power substation on the 325-acre site, which are expected to open in the first half of 2019.



WASHINGTON, D.C. — In June, D.C. voters passed a ballot initiative that would have changed wage rules for tipped workers, gradually raising their minimum hourly wage until it matched the standard minimum wage. But in mid-October, the D.C. Council repealed Initiative 77 by an 8-5 margin. Opponents of Initiative 77 say the repeal will help the city's dining scene and keep restaurant owners from cutting hours or staff. The repeal bill voted on by the Council does address some concerns of Initiative 77's supporters, such as a hotline for reporting wage theft, though these provisions must be funded in the district's upcoming budget.



WEST VIRGINIA — State parks across West Virginia will soon receive \$60 million worth of upgrades and improvements, thanks to an early October sale of \$55.2 million worth of excess lottery revenue bonds. The projects are expected to focus on modernizing parks and completing delayed maintenance projects, which officials hope will boost the state's tourism industry. The West Virginia Economic Development Authority issued the bonds, which received AAA and A1 ratings from S&P Global and Moody's, respectively.