
Maryland Licensing Workgroup Meeting Summary February 13th 2026, 10:00 a.m. (virtual)

All meetings of the Maryland Licensing Workgroup are recorded. The recording for this meeting is posted online and available to members of the public at

<https://youtu.be/TVPx8YCrPm4>.

NOTE: Under General Provisions Article, Annotated Code of Maryland §3-306, the recording constitutes the official minutes of the Maryland Licensing Workgroup meeting. This summary is prepared for ease of use by members and constitutes a public document under the Maryland Public Information Act. In the unlikely event the recording for the meeting summarized herein becomes unavailable for any reason, this summary shall constitute the official minutes for that meeting.

In Attendance

Workgroup Members

Tony Salazar, Chair (Commissioner of Financial Regulation); Matthew Calhoun; Ben Carney (Gordon, Wolf & Carney); Kevin Kesecker (SECU of Maryland); Milissa Murray (Member of the Public); Chris Rahl (Gordon Feinblatt); Emanwel Turnbull (Holland Law Firm); Nanci Weissgold (Alston & Bird); Marceline White (Economic Action Maryland)

Invited Guests

Oscar “Bo” Fears (Georgia Department of Finance); Nora Nichols (Maryland Office of the Attorney General); Peter Kitzmiller (Maryland Automobile Dealers Association)

Staff and Counsel, Office of Financial Regulation (OFR)

Kat Hyland (Deputy Commissioner); Clifford Charland (Assistant Commissioner); Meredith Merchant (Operations Director); Sabrina Brown (Money Services and Consumer Credit Supervision Director); Ayanna Daugherty (Senior Analyst); Emily Hanson (Assistant Attorney General); Gretchen Reimert (Assistant Attorney General); Kenneth Krach (Assistant Attorney General)

Public Attendees

Hugo Cantu; Robert Enten; Aaron Greenfield; Matt Pipkin; Phillip Robinson; Jason Weintraub

Agenda

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Tony Salazar (Workgroup Chair), Commissioner of Financial Regulation

- Mr. Salazar welcomed the Workgroup members and public attendees and noted that the meeting is being recorded.
- Mr. Salazar reported that the Workgroup is authorized for nine members.
- Mr. Salazar outlined the work group's mission to study financial service provider licensing systems amid the busy legislative session.

Workgroup Recommendations

Tony Salazar (Workgroup Chair), Commissioner of Financial Regulation

- Mr. Salazar discussed the proposed recommendations for the State Collection Agency Licensing Board, specifically related to potentially changing the name of the Board, allowing the Commissioner to license agencies with appeals to the Board, strengthening the Board's enforcement authority, and revising consumer member prerequisites to broaden the pool of eligible individuals. The group generally agreed to drop the proposed name change to avoid unnecessary confusion and complication.
- Mr. Salazar informed the Workgroup about House Bill 433, which is currently before the Maryland legislature. HB433 proposes an exemption for property management companies, which are currently required to be licensed as collection agencies. There was no objection among the members to OFR potentially submitting information to the legislature regarding the existence and purpose of the Workgroup, and that this licensing exemption may be premature due to the fact that the Workgroup is still meeting.
- Mr. Salazar discussed the proposed recommendation regarding the consolidation of the Consumer Loan and Installment Loan licenses. OFR Staff will retool language addressing interplay between underlying credit laws before reintroducing proposal.
- Milissa Murray proposed saving the final vote or consensus discussions on all recommendations until the end of the term. Workgroup members agreed, stating that members' views might change with new information and that advanced notice of voting would ensure maximum participation.
- After discussion, Mr. Salazar secured consensus to hold the recommendations in abeyance until a future meeting with advanced notice for a final decision.

Third-Party Litigation Financing and Probate Advance Loans

Nora Nichols, Consumer Protection Division, MD Office of the Attorney General

- Ms. Nichols presented her perspective on two topics: third-party litigation financing and probate lending.
- Ms. Nichols explained that litigation financing involves companies advancing money to parties, usually plaintiffs, in exchange for an interest in litigation proceeds. Her office views these as loans and the companies should be licensed as lenders by OFR. There is pending state legislation on this topic.
- Ms. Nichols explained that probate lending involves companies offering cash to heirs in exchange for an “assignment of interest” in the inheritance. Her office views these as loans and the companies should be licensed as lenders by OFR. There is a public settlement between her office and a probate lending company (Probate Advance, LLC).
- Mr. Salazar facilitated discussion and Q&A.

Indirect Vehicle Financing and Auto Dealers as Creditors

Peter Kitzmiller, Maryland Automobile Dealers Association (MADA)

- Mr. Kitzmiller provided industry perspective on the potential licensing of auto dealers that engage in financial activities.
- Mr. Kitzmiller explained that MADA represents 300 franchised new car and truck dealers, all of whom participate in dealer-assisted financing. MADA members are licensed by the Motor Vehicle Administration at both the dealership and individual employee levels.
- Mr. Kitzmiller stated that dealer-assisted financing is already heavily regulated at both the federal and state levels, and there is no regulatory gap to be filled by an additional license from OFR.
- Mr. Salazar noted that OFR staff is trying to get a representative from the Motor Vehicle Administration for the next meeting to provide their perspective, as they are involved in the current regulation of auto dealers.
- There were no additional questions or comments from the Workgroup members.

Mortgage Lender License and Trust Exemption

Oscar “Bo” Fears, Commissioner, Georgia Department of Banking and Finance

- Mr. Fears discussed Georgia's historical experience with a law that extended liability for consumer mortgages to secondary mortgage market participants.

- Mr. Fears explained that the Georgia Fair Lending Act of 2002 initially defined assignees as creditors, subjecting secondary market entities like trusts to the same liability and requirements as original lenders.
- Mr. Fears reported that almost immediately, secondary market players stopped buying Georgia loans, leading to Standard & Poor's announcing they would stop rating mortgage-backed securities containing Georgia loans.
- Within weeks, the Georgia legislature introduced and passed the bill with immediate effect to exempt assignees from the definition of creditor due to the devastating impact the original law had on the mortgage market.
- Mr. Salazar facilitated discussion and Q&A.

Next Steps and Adjournment

Tony Salazar (Workgroup Chair), Commissioner of Financial Regulation

Mr. Salazar identified next steps and topics for future meetings, and responded to member questions.

- OFR staff will hold all proposed recommendations in abeyance until a future meeting with advanced notice for a final decision.
- Mr. Salazar agreed to pull and retool the conceptual proposal to consolidate consumer loan and installment loan licenses due to concerns about statutory conflicts and potential unintended consequences.
- The Workgroup will continue discussion of mortgage lending and licensing exemptions licensing in the next meeting's agenda.
- The meeting adjourned at 12:14 p.m.

Next Meeting and Contact Info

Date and Time

- February 27, 2026
- 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
- Virtual (Google Meet)

Participation Options

- Join by Video: <https://meet.google.com/mco-cjpg-daj>
- Join by Phone: 1-262-885-7022 (PIN 550 367 512#)
- More phone numbers: <https://tel.meet/mco-cjpg-daj?pin=1299343031366>

Staff Coordinator

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Website

www.labor.maryland.gov/finance/frmdlicensingworkgroup.shtml