

SB349_FAV_PTAAB.pdf

Uploaded by: Caren Hoffberger

Position: FAV

TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF SENATE BILL 349 – 2/8/2022

Baltimore County- Property Tax – Credit for Homeowners Who Have Suffered a Hardship

Speaker - Property Tax Assessment Appeals Board (PTAAB) Retired Member, Baltimore County, Caren B. Hoffberger, carenbethbruce@comcast.net, 443-838-5437

Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee: I would like to take this opportunity to thank Senator Shelly Hettleman for sponsoring this bill.

As a former member of the Property Tax Assessment Appeals Board for Baltimore County, and with the guidance of the Chairman, I. William "Billy" Chase, Esquire, I would like to articulate the following distressing scenarios we have experienced. We have homeowners come before us to appeal the State's decision to deny them a property tax credit and presenting us with details relating to some tragic family difficulties (during the preceding year) (much of this even before the pandemic). These homeowners are mostly seniors who have owned their homes for many years. They have worked hard all their lives, paid their mortgages and taxes and kept a roof over their family members' heads. Under the current law, the homeowner cannot make more than \$60,000 combined gross. Therefore, the State and the Board cannot consider any hardship that has forced them into such an untenable situation thus, we are asking for some relief to assist your constituents.

For your information, there are three scenarios that seem to occur. Whether it is a natural disaster, a medical struggle, or now the pandemic, constituents unknowingly withdraw the money (usually from their IRAs, an annuity, or cash in some capital gains) specifically in order to pay for their hardship expenses. All these income streams will then qualify as a portion of their gross income calculation under the current law, and that means they cannot receive the tax credit.

People come to us paying for cancer treatment, a loved one's medical health care and/or long-term nursing care, major storm damage to their roof or home, and can prove it is the only viable way they can pay those bills and yet, we have no recourse to ameliorate the situation.

This simple legislation could mean the world to your Baltimore County tax paying, hard-working constituents during an already challenging time in their lives.

Please give HB 302 a favorable report so that seniors and other vulnerable homeowners may have the opportunity to keep their homes.

My Final Comment – The Bottom Line is – The law has been working in its current form and we have come across an unintended consequence that simply needs to be amended.

CDN SB349 FAVORABLE.pdf

Uploaded by: Claudia Wilson Randall

Position: FAV



Testimony SB 349
Budget & Taxation Committee
January 19, 2022
Position: FAVORABLE

Dear Chairman Guzzone & Members of the Budget & Taxation Committee:

The Community Development Network of Maryland (CDN) is the voice for Maryland's community development sector and serves nearly 200 member organizations. CDN—focuses on small affordable housing developers, housing counseling agencies and community-based non-profits across the state of Maryland. The mission of CDN is to promote, strengthen and advocate for the community development sector throughout Maryland's urban, suburban and rural communities. CDN envisions a state in which all communities are thriving and where people of all incomes have abundant opportunities for themselves and their families.

CDN has been part of the ongoing work to reform the process of tax sale in the state since 2016. In 2017, CDN was a lead partner in the Task Force to Study Tax Sales in Maryland. CDN currently serves on the Baltimore City Mayor's Tax Sale Workgroup in Baltimore City.

SB 349 Authorizing Baltimore County to grant a property tax credit against the county property tax imposed on a dwelling that is owned by a homeowner whose combined gross income exceeds \$60,000 if the homeowner demonstrates certain criteria, including that the homeowner or member of the homeowner's immediate family suffered a hardship related to an illness or an accident or a property casualty event at the homeowners dwelling.

The majority of people in the state impacted by tax sale are older, single, African American women living at or below the poverty line. In 2019, the average amount owed was just under \$2500. Though most of the homeowners were eligible for the Homeowner's Tax Credit Program, few had applied or were aware of the program. For these vulnerable homeowners, the tax sale has stripped away generational wealth and housing stability.

Over the years, Maryland has enacted more consumer-friendly policy to prevent the poorest homeowners from losing their houses. These improvements include higher thresholds for tax sale, removal of water bills, and the appointment of a public ombudsman to help owner occupants keep their homes.

Allowing low-income homeowners who have suffer health hardships during Covid-19 to get an additional credit will help to reduce the loss of generational wealth and displacement.

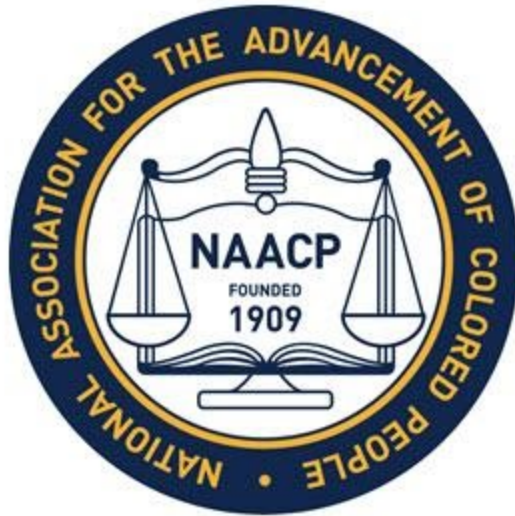
We urge your favorable report.

Submitted by Claudia Wilson Randall, Executive Director, Community Development Network

SB0349.pdf

Uploaded by: Ryan Coleman

Position: FAV



Randallstown

Po Box 731 Randallstown, MD 21133

February 6, 2022

Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: SUPPORT SB 0349 Baltimore County-Property Tax-Credit for Homeowners Who Have Suffered a Hardship

Dear Chair Guzzone, and Vice Chair Rosapepe and Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee:

May it be known the mission of the Randallstown NAACP is to secure equal rights in order to eliminate race-based discrimination and ensure the health and wellbeing of all persons in Baltimore County and the State of Maryland.

During the pandemic, rich Americans were more likely to get richer, poor Americans were more likely to get poorer — and the middle income Americans on average got poorer. This legislation before you today seeks to address the devastation of the pandemic on Baltimore County families.

The Randallstown Branch of the NAACP urges a favorable report from the committee on SB 0349.

yours

Ryan Coleman

President, Randallstown NAACP

<http://randallstownnaacp.yolasite.com>

<https://www.facebook.com/NAACPrandallstown>

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SB349_FAV_Hettleman.pdf

Uploaded by: Shelly Hettleman

Position: FAV

SHELLY HETTLEMAN
Legislative District 11
Baltimore County

Judicial Proceedings Committee

Joint Committee on Children, Youth,
and Families

Joint Committee on the Chesapeake
and Atlantic Coastal Bays Critical Area



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The Senate of Maryland
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

TESTIMONY OF SENATOR SHELLY HETTLEMAN

**SB 349 -Baltimore County - Property Tax - Credit for Homeowners
Who Have Suffered a Hardship**

This bill allows homeowners in Baltimore County who have endured significant hardship but are denied the tax credit because their gross income is over \$60,000 to qualify for the tax credit against the County.

According to testimony on the version of this bill that was heard in the House last year, every month there are a few appellants to the Baltimore County Tax Assessment Appeals Board who have had to take money out of a retirement account to pay for an unexpected and significant financial hardship, like medical expenses for themselves or a family member. Most of these individuals are senior citizens. By taking money out of their retirement accounts, that money counts as income and puts their gross income over the cap to qualify for the tax credit, which they often do not realize would disqualify them until it is too late.

Currently, the Appeals Board has no discretion in granting exemptions to qualify for the tax credit. That means that individuals who believe they qualify because of a hardship file an appeal, bring themselves to testify to tell their story, but are left being told that there is nothing the Appeals Board can do. These seniors are left telling their Delegates and Senators these stories in the hopes of making a hardship exemption. That is why we are reviewing this bill right now. This bill would set up that hardship exemption if their gross income is over \$60,000. If the homeowner suffered a hardship that is illness, injury, or property casualty related in the previous year, and as a result incurred expenses that were a significant financial distress, the tax credit could be granted. The homeowner would have the burden to document the hardship and the related expenses.

For the foregoing reasons, I respectfully request this committee's favorable report on this bill.

SB 349 Baltimore County Property Tax Credit for Ho

Uploaded by: Tammy Bresnahan

Position: FAV



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SB 349 Baltimore County – Property Tax – Credit for Homeowners Who Have Suffered a Hardship
FAVORABLE
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
February 8, 2022

Good Afternoon Chair Guzzone and members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee. I am Tammy Bresnahan Director of Advocacy for AARP MD. AARP MD supports **SB 349 Baltimore County – Property Tax – Credit for Homeowners Who Have Suffered a Hardship**. We thank Senator Hettleman for sponsoring this bill.

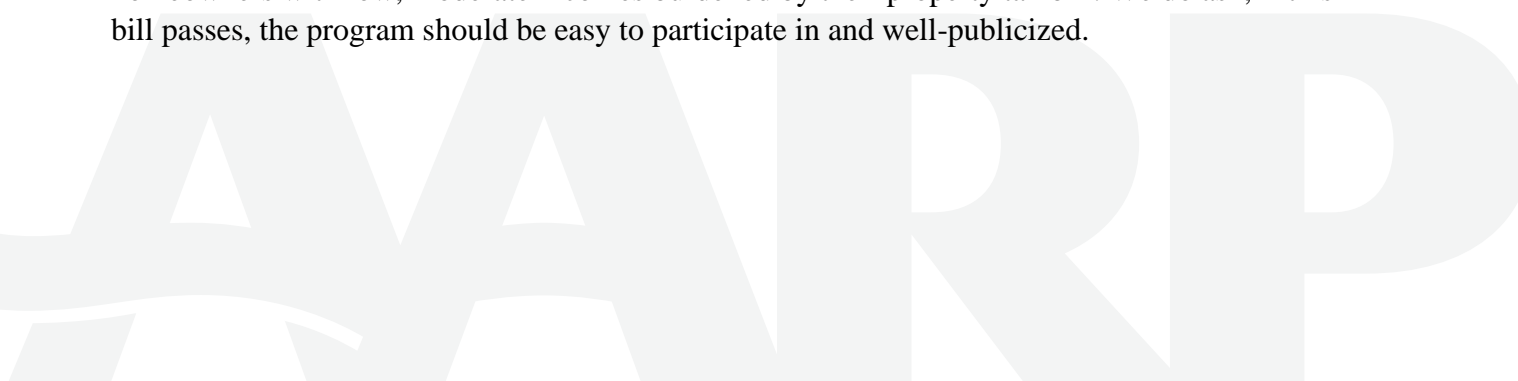
As you may know, AARP is the largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization representing the interests of Americans age 50 and older and their families. Key priorities of our organization include helping all Marylanders achieve financial and health security. AARP strongly believes that all individuals have the right to be self-reliant and live with dignity in retirement.

In short, SB 349 authorizes the governing body of Baltimore County to grant, by law, a property tax credit against the county property tax imposed on a dwelling that is owned by a homeowner whose combined gross income exceeds \$60,000 if the homeowner demonstrates a hardship and that includes the homeowner or member of the homeowner's immediate family suffered a hardship related to an illness or an accident or a property casualty event at the homeowner's dwelling.

The mainstay of local taxation is the tax on real estate, known as the property tax. It is used to fund an array of state and local services, most notably public schools. Policymakers face challenges with the tax's structure and administration. This includes its burden on households with low income. While property taxes mainly exist at the local level, states play an important role in creating property tax relief programs. States are also responsible for setting the parameters and practices for assessing the tax.

The property tax can be a burdensome tax for many individuals with low incomes, older people and especially older Baltimore County residents who have, or their family has suffered a hardship.

AARP believes that property tax relief should be equitable, cost-effective, and targeted to homeowners with low, moderate incomes burdened by their property tax bill. We do ask, if this bill passes, the program should be easy to participate in and well-publicized.



For these reasons AARP respectfully request a favorable report on SB 349. For questions or additional information, please feel free to contact Tammy Bresnahan, Director of Advocacy at tbresnahan@arp.org or by calling 410-302-8451.