

Dear Honorable Members of the **Ways and Means Committee**,



My name is Rianna Eckel, and I am a resident of the 43rd District. I am submitting this testimony as a member of Showing Up for Racial Justice Baltimore, a group of individuals working to move white folks as part of a multi-racial movement for equity and racial justice in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and Howard County. We are also working in collaboration with CASA. **I am testifying in support of [SB0552](#).**

In 2021 the Maryland General Assembly passed the most effective anti-poverty and pro-low-income families legislation seen in the country - benefiting 450,000 families, and putting roughly \$275 million into our communities. The expansion of the earned income and child tax credit to include all Marylanders regardless of immigration status uplifted thousands of hardworking, tax-paying Maryland families facing economic hardship.

However, we know that economic recovery from the pandemic-era shutdowns has been disproportionate. After being excluded from receiving thousands of dollars in federal and state Covid relief stimulus payments undocumented immigrant communities have faced the brunt of the economic crisis. With price increases, stagnant wages, and high inflation it is imperative that the General Assembly make permanent the progress they green-lit in 2021.

Federal, state, and local working family tax credits are the most powerful anti-poverty tools we have, and our legislators must pass the Family Prosperity Act to preserve the strong and inclusive EITC expansions. These credits help people navigate times of crisis, reduce the number of children growing up in poverty, and strengthen our economy. Research shows that the EITC and CTC substantially benefit women and communities of color, and boosts maternal and infant health, school performance, and future earnings.

The Family Prosperity Act will invest in all of Maryland's families to create a stronger future. It is for these reasons that I am encouraging you to vote **in support of [SB0552](#).**

Thank you for your time, service, and consideration.

Sincerely,
Rianna Eckel
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Showing Up for Racial Justice Baltimore