



**SB 766/HB 1007 – Fair Share for Maryland Act
Budget & Taxation Committee
February 21, 2024**

The Maryland Out of School Time Network (MOST) is a statewide organization dedicated to closing opportunity gaps by expanding both the quantity and quality of afterschool and summer learning opportunities for school-aged young people. MOST serves as the backbone organization for the Maryland Coalition for Community Schools. The Maryland Coalition for Community Schools, founded in 2016, advocates for student and family success by leading the charge to expand the Community School Model in Maryland. Free State PTA is a state-level branch of National PTA, representing parents, teachers, students, and community members. Free State PTA works to promote the welfare of children and youth, fostering collaboration between parents, educators, and stakeholders to enhance education and well-being.

The state of Maryland benefits from being one of the wealthiest states in the nation. Recently, our budget balanced with help from the influx of federal funding during the pandemic. Meanwhile, we've committed to transforming our education system through the Blueprint for Maryland's future – a promise that appears to waver with a projected shortfall in the Blueprint Fund of 29 million FY 2027 - rising to over \$5.1 billion by FY 2029. And there are other priorities like transportation and school construction that are already experiencing cuts as deficits loom. Our tax system currently offers loopholes that benefit corporations and the wealthy. Taxes never sound good to anyone; however, Senate Bill 766 provides a commonsense approach to reforming our tax system so everyone pays their fair share. Many working families will see their tax burden reduced while the state will generate enough revenue to continue innovating and reforming our education system. Ultimately, our strong economy, world-class schools, and thriving families will continue to attract businesses and residents to the state.

Efforts to reform the tax code and generate revenue take time; waiting just one more year puts us at risk of making painful and dangerous choices. We applaud Senator Hettleman and the co-sponsors of Senate Bill 766 for the political fortitude to take action to address our revenue crisis now instead of punting it into the future. We urge a favorable report for SB766. Free State PTA joins MOST and MD4CS in support of this legislation.

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