



March 6, 2024

The Honorable Vanessa E. Atterbeary
Chair, Ways and Means Committee
Room 131
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chair Atterbeary,

My name is Darren Clark; I'm the CEO & Owner of Clark Computer Services. We've been in business in Maryland since 2003, employing 40+ Marylanders, purchasing from 200+ Maryland businesses, and providing services to over 1,200 Maryland businesses.

I'm writing in response to **HB 1515, Sales and Use Tax – Rate Reduction and Services**, and I'll get straight to the point: this bill is bad news for us. It's not just bad for CLARK; it's also bad for the Marylanders we employ, the Maryland businesses we purchase from, and the Maryland businesses to whom we provide service.

We're just getting back on our feet after COVID and the recession. Adding a 5% sales tax on services now means we'll have to either cut our profits or raise prices. Neither option is good for us as a Maryland business or for Maryland's economy.

An immediate impact will be cutting costs by buying from larger businesses that can offer lower prices, thus reducing purchases from local Maryland businesses. As a proud Maryland business owner, I have always strived to purchase locally. It saddens me to think that this bill will force me to move away from local Maryland businesses, many of whom are small businesses that rely on the revenue we provide.

Then there is the impact this will have on my employees, who are also Maryland citizens. It upsets me to think about how their cost of living will increase as businesses pass the costs associated with this bill on to them. I see many of my employees struggling with the recent increase in the amount they are paying for staples such as groceries. For the sake of my employees alone, I beg of you to oppose HB 1515. Pushing the increase that this bill will cause onto them is not just unfair, it's cruel. Haven't Marylanders suffered enough already?

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We're talking about real consequences to the citizens and businesses of Maryland here— with HB 1515, people's jobs are at risk, with less money circulating in Maryland and businesses potentially shutting down. HB1515 is the opposite of what we should be doing for the citizens and businesses of our state to thrive. Not only this, but it's counter to the goals our governor has made for attracting businesses to Maryland.

Please **oppose HB 1515, Sales and Use Tax – Rate Reduction and Services**. Let's not make things harder for the businesses that have been dedicated to Maryland for decades.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D Clark". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Darren Clark
CEO & Owner,
Clark Computer Services

Service Disabled Veteran Owned Business

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