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Testimony in Support of SB 859 – Fair Share for Maryland Act of 2025

Presented to the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

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I strongly support the Fair Share for Maryland Act (SB 859) because it balances growing needs in Maryland with the untapped capacity of wealthy corporations and individuals to pay their fair share for public services.

As a 48-year resident of Baltimore City, parent and now grandparent, of children who attend Baltimore City Public Schools, the socio-economic disparity that clouds the future of all of Maryland has long been apparent to me. My awareness of the historical forces that created that disparity dates to my legal work at the ACLU of Maryland in the 1990s. But it's not just about Baltimore City. With the massive changes to our national economy, our rural neighbors are also in need.

These days, I value my residence in Maryland more than ever, with its commitment to democratic values and process, its support of our most vulnerable citizens, and its recognition of guaranteed civil rights. **But we can be even better.** Maryland can and should be a national role model for growing a strong economy while prioritizing equity. Indeed, it is more important than ever that we serve as a beacon of light. Large corporations should be paying their fair share just as small businesses do. Wealthy citizens should not have a lower tax rate.

It's possible that some of the provisions of the Fair Share Act will cause my tax bill to go up. I am willing to pay **more** taxes if **more** Marylanders can support their families and benefit from living in the Free State. Its provisions will ensure safer, healthier, and more prosperous lives for us all.

“If it is true that a chain is only as strong as its weakest link, isn't it also true a society is only as healthy as its sickest citizen and only as wealthy as its most deprived?”

— **Maya Angelou,**

I respectfully ask the committee to make a favorable report on SB 859.

Respectfully submitted,
Malissa Ruffner