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TESTIMONY ON SB859 - POSITION: FAVORABLE
Fair Share for Maryland Act of 2025

TO: Chair Guzzonw, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and members of the Budget and Taxation Committee

FROM: Carol Stern

My name is Carol Stern. I am a resident of District 16. I am submitting this testimony as a member of Adat Shalom Reconstructionist Congregation. I also provide this testimony as a taxpayer, who believes in paying my fare share.

The Jewish text that shapes my religious and moral conviction regarding fair share taxation comes from a 20th century rabbi and leading Torah scholar in Israel, **Eliezer Yehuda Waldenberg**. After his intensive study of taxation in Jewish law, Rabbi Waldenberg concluded that the Jewish approach toward taxation must be that almost all communal taxes are assessed by progressive means—the wealthy paying more, both in sum and in percentage, than the poor.

SB859 will ensure the wealthiest 1% of households in Maryland pay their fair share in taxes (those earning ~\$775,000/year or more). They would see an average increase of less than 1% of their income. This bill will **support local, Maryland-based businesses** by ensuring a level playing field so that their large corporate competitors are also paying their fair share in state and local taxes. This type of tax structure is exactly what my Jewish values say we should support.

The Fair Share for Maryland Plan SB859 will raise \$1.6 billion in revenue each year to support good schools, health care, transportation, and the state workforce needed to deliver high-quality services. It will **cut taxes for more than 1 million Marylanders** with a family income of \$106,000 or less. Boosting working families' incomes will reduce child poverty and strengthen our economy.

The Fair Share for Maryland Plan will advance economic and racial justice by addressing aspects of Maryland's tax system that disproportionately benefit wealthy, white households at the expense of Marylanders of color.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB859.