

Testimony Against HB0023

Honorable Senators

Please enter an unfavorable report against HB0023.

I am against

- Authorizing the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore City or the governing body of a county to establish, by law, a subclass of real property consisting of certain commercial and industrial property and to set a special property tax rate for certain commercial and industrial property for the purpose of financing
 - certain transportation improvements or
 - the approved budget of the county board of education;
- applying the Act to all taxable years beginning after June 30, 2025.

I attended the hearing on January 28 and I heard the numerous business associations testify against this bill. They stated that the business climate was bad enough without raising their property taxes. One group that represented business parks stated that the occupancy rates were not good and this bill would only make it that much worse. They made a point that appraisals of business rental property were based on occupancy. Lower occupancy would result in a lower appraisal and thus less tax revenue despite raising the property tax rates.

As a personal property owner, I am well aware that the constantly rising appraisal of my property allows for increased property tax revenue for the County without the need to raise my property tax rate. Consequently, do not focus just on increasing the tax rate on businesses without considering how the raising rates could affect property appraisals.

At the hearing on January 28, the County Executives from Anne Arundel, Frederick, and Montgomery all lauded the bill as it would give counties more tax revenue without the Counties raising property taxes on its citizens. The Maryland Association of Counties also agreed that this was a great way to increase revenues without directly taxing the citizens. They are counting on many taxpayers believing that businesses are just greedy profit makers not paying their fair share and not realizing that the businesses will just pass the tax increase to those who buy their goods and services (If they do not leave the State or go bankrupt).

Instead of trying to squeeze more money out of the few businesses we have when you claim you need to attract new businesses, please do what your constituents are doing during these hard times when we cannot pay for all we would like to buy. Some of us make decisions on what are necessities and what are luxuries and we postpone the luxuries to better times. Others go into debt and use credit cards to do both (some less fortunate must use credit cards for necessities).

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Please do not make the business climate that much worse in Maryland by passing this bill. Instead, be fiscally responsible and enter an unfavorable report against HB0023

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