

Kathleen Kern
Windsor Mill, 21244

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

Presented to the Budget and Taxation Committee

March 5, 2025

My name is Kathleen Kern. I am a resident of District 10. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB 859, the Fair Share for Maryland Act of 2025.

I am a social worker who works at Clifton T. Perkins Hospital Center and a member and volunteer at Kadampa Meditation Center Maryland. I am in support of the Fair Share for Maryland Act of 2025 as it supports funding for critical state offered services and the state employees providing the work. State employees live and work in Maryland. I am in support of strengthening our state system and its local workers.

Currently, Clifton T. Perkins Hospital Center is severely understaffed which diminishes patient care provided, causes unsafe working conditions, and contributes to staff burnout and low morale. Staff retention is also low. New employees don't stay for long and seasoned employees are leaving. Having the funds to address the mounting problems is necessary. As a social worker, I lead my department's morale committee and serve as a union representative. It's apparent that we are under resourced and the staff are struggling.

As a middle class citizen and provider for a family of 3, it's hard to establish financial security. I work several jobs and am only able to pay for necessities and can barely afford that with inflation and rising electric costs this winter. I fear every day that I will have an expensive car repair or an illness that will leave me out of work for a few days. We are living paycheck to paycheck and are just getting by. A fairer distribution of tax costs could ease the stress of many middle class and low income citizens.

The Fair Share For Maryland Act of 2025 is an opportunity to designate funding for our under resourced state system, close the equity gap, and establish a fairer distribution of wealth among citizens. I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB 859.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen Kern