

March 5, 2025
Lisa Barkan
Towson, MD 21286

TESTIMONY ON SB#859 - POSITION: FAVORABLE
Fair Share for Maryland Act 2025

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

FROM: Lisa Barkan

My name is Lisa Barkan. I am a retired Maryland Assistant Attorney General and a resident of District 42B. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB#859 Fair Share For Maryland Act 2025 because I believe that every student should receive a high quality public school education and that all Marylanders should be provided with the essential services they need.

Maryland faces a \$2.7 billion budget deficit. Some Maryland leaders contend that this gap can only be closed by slashing the budget. As a result funding for education and for other essential services is in jeopardy. They are wrong.

Instead of cutting services, legislators can choose to raise revenue and simultaneously make Maryland's tax code fairer by passing SB859. This legislation would increase taxes on the very wealthy and close loopholes that allow multi-state corporations operating in Maryland to avoid paying taxes.

I know how important it is to fully fund public education. I was able to become an attorney because of the strength of my public school education. I was raised in a working class family and was the first person in my immediate family to attend college. Only one of my father's ten siblings attended college. My father and my maternal grandmother did not finish high school.

Because of the rigorous education I received in public schools in the 1970s and 1980s, I was prepared for and did well at Brandeis University, a highly competitive environment, and NYU Law School, a top ten law school. The education I received has enabled me to earn a good living, to enter the middle class, and to lead a life that is much less stressful than my parents'.

Likewise, this legislature recognized the importance of education . During 2021 it enacted the Blueprint for Maryland's Future (the Blueprint). a comprehensive plan that would provide every public school student with the tools they need. to succeed in this very competitive world. State leaders promised to fund the legislation. Now they are backing down. They contend that the budget deficit forecloses fully funding the Blueprint. They simply have no choice. They are wrong. There is an option—passing SB 859

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB 859.