

Letter of Support**Senate Bill 295 – Income Tax – Income Tax Reconciliation Program – Establishment**
Budget and Taxation Committee
January 22, 2025

I thank Senator Cory McCray for introducing Senate Bill 295, the Maryland Fair Taxation for Justice-Involved Individuals Act, and I applaud the Senator for his continued commitment to economic and social justice.

As Maryland's chief financial officer, I am writing to express support for SB295, which will create a structured tax resolution program for returning citizens. In my role overseeing Maryland's tax administration and revenue collection, I have witnessed firsthand how unmanageable tax obligations can create barriers for those who have paid their debt to society and are working to rebuild their lives. This is not just a matter of fiscal policy – it's a moral issue. Our duty as public servants extend beyond just collecting revenue – we must ensure our tax system promotes, rather than prevents, economic opportunity for all Marylanders who seek to contribute to our state's prosperity.

My office currently administers several similar initiatives, including the Offer-in-Compromise and Low Income Hardship Programs. These programs provide flexible payment options and potential relief from penalties and interest for eligible taxpayers. Additionally, our Office of Public Engagement and the newly established Office of the Taxpayer Advocate will play key roles in helping justice-involved individuals access these vital programs. They will provide guidance to help individuals understand their options and navigate potential resolutions effectively.

The proposed legislation signifies a crucial investment in the economic future of Maryland, especially for communities of color that continue to be disproportionately impacted by incarceration. Individuals who have completed their sentences must not be weighed down by ever expanding tax debts that impede their journey toward rebuilding their lives. By empowering returning citizens to engage actively in society, we foster financial stability for families, stimulate local businesses through increased consumer spending, and catalyze economic revitalization in underserved neighborhoods. This approach benefits individual lives and strengthens the overall community, paving the way for a more equitable and prosperous future for all.

If you have any questions, please contact Stephen Harrington, Director of Government Affairs, at SHarrington@marylandtaxes.gov.



Brooke E. Lierman
Comptroller of Maryland

