

February 20, 2025
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TESTIMONY ON HB#1014 - POSITION: FAVORABLE
Fair Share for Maryland Act of 2025

TO: Chair Vanessa E. Atterbeary, Vice Chair Jheanelle K. Wilkins, and members of the Ways & Means Committee

FROM: Charles Rammelkamp

My name is Charles Rammelkamp. I retired ten years ago from the Social Security Administration, where I worked at the Woodlawn headquarters. I have lived in Baltimore City for more than forty years. As an employee at SSA, I saw firsthand what an enormous difference the program made in the lives of ordinary citizens. This is government at work for everyone, the quintessential example of a fair share.

The Fair Share for Maryland Plan modestly increases the tax burden of those who can more easily afford it, people making over \$775,000 a year, and goes toward making up the current shortfall in the budget while providing benefits that help the whole state in terms of safety, accessibility, and education.

The tax structure now, with companies like Amazon not paying a dime, more resembles an oligarchy. If the wealthiest in our state contributed just a fraction more, as stipulated in the proposal, everybody would benefit, which is the whole idea behind “democracy.” With schools, health care, and infrastructure more generously funded, everyone is a winner.

As a resident of Baltimore City, I was shocked and appalled when former governor Hogan pulled the plug on the red line, the light rail project that would have run from Social Security in Woodlawn to Bayview in southeast Baltimore. This sort of transportation would have enhanced the mobility of so many Baltimoreans. Instead, the funds were diverted to suburban areas that just so happened to be near Governor Hogan’s businesses. With the surplus dollars to be accrued from Fair Share, the expanded mobility of all citizens can finally become a reality. Moreover, other needed infrastructure projects, including sewage, can be funded as well, from which all citizens will benefit.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB1014.