



## Testimony against tax cuts for Country Clubs (HB-0874 Property Tax - Special Use Assessment of Country Clubs and Golf Courses - Repeal)

Dear Chair Atterbeary and members of the Ways and Means Committee,

My name is Demitrius Henriquez, a Gaithersburg resident from the Montgomery County branch of the Democratic Socialist of America. Nationally we represent over 90,000 members, but locally in Montgomery County we represent 500+ of your constituents as dues paying members as well as hundreds more that volunteer for our cause for a more just and democratic society. I am writing to this body to urge you to say **no to tax loopholes for country clubs**.

In the face of huge budget **shortfalls of almost \$3 billion** we find it absurd and frankly offensive to the working people of Maryland that tax breaks for institutions available only to the richest Marylanders are even being discussed. Keeping these tax loopholes will send a clear signal to the working class of Maryland that our government is more concerned with the leisure of its wealthiest residents than with the everyday struggle of the workers in our state. A struggle that will not be getting any easier as proposed \$2 billion budget cuts affect the most vulnerable Marylanders. As the Trump administration fires thousands of federal workers. As the prices of household goods continue to go up even after years of high inflation. This is the reality Marylanders are facing.

200\$ million in disability funding, 100\$ million in university funding set to be cut. This is what some lawmakers deem necessary so that we can subsidize the lavish lifestyles of the 1% of our state. And that is what this is, not a tax cut but a subsidy that is paid for by the working

class that will feel the impact of the lost revenue the most. Already included in the budget is 100's of millions of dollars in direct subsidies to corporations in the name of "economic growth and development". The contrast between the support Maryland gives to its wealthiest businesses and its average citizen is already stark. Reinstating this loophole would only serve to highlight these inequalities.

But even if we are to take the states budget goals at face value this bill advances nothing of the states agenda. These tax cuts will **not create jobs**, it will **not generate any revenue**, in fact the opposite and it **does not provide any utility** to Marylanders. If you support these tax cuts I want you to explain *why* to the mother of a disabled child who no longer has individual support at school. I want you to explain *why* to the college student whose classes are overflowing or cut. But we already know you won't. No one in the media will bring this up except with the vague term "tax cuts" lumped in with all the other tax proposals. These tax breaks are something that almost none of your constituents support, and you all know it, but some of you push it anyway hoping no one will notice. But we are here to say that we, your constituents, notice and we say no!

We ask you delegates to side with the working class, not with millionaires. DSA will be paying close attention as we have been and your votes will also not go unnoticed. Make the right decision, say yes to closing tax loopholes for country clubs. Thank you.