



**Testimony **Summary** in Favor of  
SENATE BILL 457:**

**An Act Concerning  
Property Taxes – Authority of Counties to Establish  
Subclasses and Set 2 Separate Rates for Land and  
Improvements to Land**

**Hearing of the Budget & Taxation Committee**

**February 18, 2026**

**Rick Rybeck, Director  
Just Economics, LLC**

My name is Rick Rybeck. I'm an attorney with a master's degree in real estate and urban development.

I'm testifying in support of Senate Bill 457, introduced by Senator Rosapepe. The purpose of this legislation is to provide Maryland counties and Baltimore City with the same power to set property tax rates as is now provided to most municipalities under MD CODE § 6-303. SB 457 amends MD CODE § 6-302 allowing counties and Baltimore to set different tax rates on privately-created building values and publicly-created land values. **There is no reason to deny counties and Baltimore taxing powers already delegated to municipalities.** If only for fairness and parity, Senate Bill 457 should be enacted into law.

Unfortunately, **the Fiscal Note accompanying this bill paints a false picture.** First, the software change required to generate tax bills is a simple arithmetic equation. During this age of AI coding and cloud data storage, a \$39 million cost estimate seems excessive. Second, **SB 224, very similar to SB 457, has a \$0 fiscal impact to the State according to its Fiscal Note.** Third, even if SDAT must spend money to update its software, **this expenditure is already required by current law, MD CODE § 6-303. SB 457 creates no new spending requirement.**

In Pennsylvania, about twenty communities have used the ability to shift property taxes off of building values and onto land values to promote job creation and affordable housing without new spending or revenue loss.

SB 457 does not mandate tax reform. **SB 457 allows counties and Baltimore to enhance employment, affordability and economic vitality. I urge your support.**

If you have questions, please contact me at [r.rybeck@justeconomicsllc.com](mailto:r.rybeck@justeconomicsllc.com) .