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Budget and Taxation Committee

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Education, Business, and  
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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
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**Senate Bill 735 – Property Tax – Petition to Review Value of Commercial Real Property**

March 3, 2026

Mister Chairman and Members of the Budget & Taxation Committee:

Under current law, a local jurisdiction may appeal a property assessment only once every three years under Maryland’s triennial assessment cycle. Meanwhile, any taxpayer - an individual or a corporate entity – can appeal an assessment in each taxable year.

Senate Bill 735 will allow a county or municipal government to file a petition for review of the value of commercial real property during the years between that 3-year cycle just as taxpayers can already do but only for commercial properties, and only in cases when clear evidence (namely, public records of an actual sale price driven by market forces) shows the assessment is significantly out of date. And importantly, the bill includes language that allows a local government to petition for a mid-cycle review only when the sale price is at least 20 percent higher than the assessed value. This language ensures that this authority is used only in exceptional cases where there is strong evidence that existing assessment may be out of step with market reality and it prevents a floodgate of appeals by local governments.

Accurate commercial assessments are critical to funding public safety, transportation infrastructure, housing initiatives, and community development. When assessments lag significantly behind real market value, the result is distortion in the local tax base, and the burden moves onto residents, small businesses and other property owners.

Senate Bill 735 will provide counties and municipalities with the exact same right that individuals and corporations already have to petition for a review of the value of commercial property. It will provide a practical, narrowly tailored tool to ensure commercial property assessments remain fair and aligned with real-world market conditions, and it will ensure that levels of government receive their fair share of property taxes. And so, I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 735 with amendments.

NOTE: I am offering two technical clarifying amendments.