

## HB 139 – UNFAVORABLE

**Topic:** Sales and Use Tax – Tax-Free Day – Veterans' Day

**The McDonald Mandate: Respect is More Than a One-Day Sale**

**To the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee:**

My name is **Ms. McDonald**. I am a candidate for Delegate in District 45. I am here to testify as **UNFAVORABLE** on HB 139. While this bill wears the mask of "honoring veterans," it is actually another example of the State offering a crumb while they take away the whole loaf.

### 1. A One-Day Gimmick vs. Year-Round Neglect

HB 139 proposes a tax-free day on Veterans' Day. We do not need a one-day shopping discount; we need year-round accountability. Many of our veterans are the very people facing an **imminent threat of homelessness** in District 45. They are the ones being hit by the "stripping of services" from the DDA and the Department of Health. To offer a tax break on a toaster or a TV while these men and women are losing their disability care and housing stability is the definition of "Jive."

### 2. The "Rainy Day" Hypocrisy

The State claims it can afford the "fiscal impact" of a tax-free day, yet it sits on a **\$2.2 Billion Rainy Day Fund** while our veterans are drowning in the streets. You found the money for a retail gimmick, but you can't find the money to keep community hubs like **2100 Guilford Avenue** open? My mandate is: **Stop the Fire Sale**. If you want to honor veterans, keep the State's assets and turn them into veteran-led vocational centers and grocery hubs—don't just give them a discount at the mall.

### 3. Stop the Selective Respect

We see the same pattern in **HB 607**, where officials are getting **\$185,000 raises**. You are taking care of the "top brass" and the "retailers," but you are ignoring the citizens at the bottom. I cannot support a "Tax-Free Day" while the State is still failing to provide the basic resources it owes to the people of Baltimore.

## THE CONTRAST: WHAT THE STATE CUTS VS. WHAT THE OFFICIALS GET

**WHAT THE STATE CUT (Services taken from Veterans & Citizens):**

- **\$300 Million:** Total cuts to the Developmental Disabilities (DDA) budget.
- **\$150 Million:** Direct general fund cuts to disability services.

- **Medical Eligibility:** Procedural "stripping" of health services (**SB 742**).
- **Housing Stability:** Lack of funding for permanent community-led housing.

**WHAT THE OFFICIALS GET (What they kept for themselves):**

- **Tax-Free Gimmicks:** The cost of lost revenue from **HB 139**.
- **\$2.2 Billion:** Sitting in the **Rainy Day Fund** while vets are on the street.
- **\$185,000 Salaries:** Massive pay hikes for state officials (**HB 607**).
- **Asset Sales:** Selling off 2100 Guilford to private developers.

Conclusion

I urge an **UNFAVORABLE** report. Respect is not a one-day sale; it is a lifetime commitment. Stop the jive and start driving real resources back into our neighborhoods.

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Ms. McDonald**

*Candidate for Delegate, District 45*

**By Authority of: Nichole McDonald for District 45, Lonetta Mason, Treasurer**