



Chair Jheanelle Wilkins
and Members, Ways and Means Committee
130 Taylor House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

January 27, 2026

Dear Chair Wilkins and Members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Dan Reed and I serve as the Maryland Policy Director for [Greater Greater Washington](#), a nonprofit that works to advance sustainability and equity in housing, land use, and transportation throughout Greater Washington and beyond. **GGWash strongly supports House Bill 78**, which will help revitalize neighborhoods and generate revenue at a time when the state is facing an ongoing budget shortfall.

Our current property tax structure charges the same rate for both the land and the improvements on that land, meaning someone who owns a vacant lot pays less than if there was a building on that lot—and effectively has an incentive to keep it that way. We can see the consequences of this across the state, from suburban rail stations surrounded by open fields to the vacant lots pockmarking blocks in cities like Baltimore.

House Bill 330 would allow local jurisdictions to charge different rates for land and for improvements—sometimes called a split-rate or land value tax. This means that tax rates for vacant land could go up, creating parity with homeowners and encouraging landowners to put their property to use. An experiment with split-rate property taxes in Allentown, Pennsylvania reduced homeowners' tax liability by 90% with no impact on the city's coffers¹.

We're excited that the General Assembly is considering this innovative solution, and ask the Ways and Means Committee for a favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Dan Reed'.

Dan Reed
Maryland Policy Director

¹ <https://ggwash.org/view/89585/how-virginia-could-cut-homeowners-taxes-and-revitalize-downtowns-at-the-same-time>

The Washington, DC region is great and it can be greater.