

January 24, 2026

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The Honorable Delegate Jheanelle K. Wilkins
Chair, House Ways and Means Committee
House Office Building
Room 131
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Maryland Society of Accounting and Tax Professionals

Re: House Bill 411 Income Tax Standard Deduction Alteration

Chair Wilkins and Members of the Committee,

The Maryland Society of Accounting and Tax Professionals represents over 1,400 tax and accounting professionals who collectively serve more than 400,000 Maryland taxpayers and small businesses. We respectfully submit this testimony in support of House Bill 411 with an amendment.

House Bill 411 takes an important step toward broad-based tax relief by increasing the Maryland standard deduction and applying future inflation adjustments. MSATP strongly supports the standard deduction as a tool for tax relief because it is simple to administer, widely accessible, and does not require additional documentation, eligibility tests, or compliance burdens for taxpayers or tax professionals.

From a practitioner's perspective, increasing the standard deduction is one of the most efficient ways to deliver tax relief. It reduces complexity, minimizes audit risk, and benefits a broad segment of taxpayers without adding carve-outs or special rules to Maryland's tax code.

Maryland has a relatively high individual income tax burden compared with many other states. Increasing the standard deduction is a practical way to ease that burden for a broad base of taxpayers, particularly low- and middle-income households, which are more likely to claim the standard deduction.

MSATP believes the standard deduction amounts proposed in House Bill 411 are too modest to meaningfully address current economic conditions. While the bill moves in the right direction, the increase does not sufficiently offset rising costs related to housing, food, healthcare, and transportation for Maryland households.

To provide meaningful, broad-based relief while maintaining administrative simplicity, MSATP recommends setting the Maryland standard deduction at approximately one-half of the federal standard deduction for the applicable tax year. Based on projected 2026 federal amounts, this would result in a Maryland standard deduction of approximately

- \$8,050 for single filers
- \$12,075 for heads of household
- \$16,100 for married couples filing jointly and surviving spouses



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Tying the State standard deduction to a fixed percentage of the federal amount provides clarity, consistency, and transparency, while ensuring the benefit remains meaningful over time.

To achieve the bill's stated purpose and provide meaningful relief, MSATP encourages the Committee to consider a higher standard deduction. A higher standard deduction would better support low- and middle-income taxpayers, reduce reliance on targeted credits that complicate the tax code, and ensure that any revenue reduction delivers a clear and equitable benefit.

With these amendments, House Bill 411 would more effectively balance taxpayer relief, administrative simplicity, and sound tax policy.

For these reasons, the Maryland Society of Accounting and Tax Professionals respectfully urges a Favorable Report with Amendment on House Bill 411.
Respectfully submitted

Giavante Hawkins

Giavante' Hawkins

