



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 24, 2026

Delegate Jheanelle Wilkins  
Chair, House Ways and Means Committee  
Annapolis, Maryland

RE: HB 826 Property Tax – Residential Real Property – Moratorium on Assessment Increases

Position: Support

Good afternoon, Chair Wilkins and members of the Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to present House Bill 826. House Bill 826 establishes a temporary moratorium on increases in the assessed value of residential real property in Maryland for three years beginning after June 30, 2026.

During this period, property assessments for residential homeowners would not increase over the prior value, except under clearly defined circumstances.

The bill allows increases only when:

- The owner initiates a zoning change;
- There is a change in use or character of the property;
- Substantially completed improvements add at least \$100,000 in value;
- A prior assessment error is corrected;
- A residential use assessment is terminated; or
- A subdivision occurs

In short, unless a homeowner significantly alters or improves their property, their assessment would remain stable for three years.

### **Why This Bill Is Necessary**

Maryland families are facing historic cost-of-living pressures. Groceries, gas, utilities, insurance premiums, and mortgage payments have all risen dramatically.

For many Marylanders, particularly seniors on fixed incomes, young families purchasing their first homes, and working families just trying to keep up, rising property assessments translate directly into higher tax bills. These increases occur even when homeowners have made no improvements and realized no additional income from their property.

### **Supporting Affordability and Stability**

Housing affordability is one of the most pressing issues facing our state. Maryland already ranks among the highest-cost states to live in. Property tax increases driven by escalating assessments only add to the strain.

House Bill 826 provides:

- Immediate relief from rapid assessment growth
- Budget certainty for households
- Protection for fixed-income homeowners
- A cooling-off period during economic uncertainty

This moratorium is temporary. It does not permanently alter the assessment system. It simply pauses automatic increases during a period when Marylanders need breathing room.

Importantly, the bill still permits increases when property owners take actions that materially enhance value, ensuring fairness within the tax system.

At a time when the cost of living and affordability are at the forefront of every kitchen-table conversation, the General Assembly has an opportunity to provide meaningful, targeted relief.

House Bill 826 strikes a careful balance between fiscal responsibility and compassion for Maryland families.

I respectfully ask for a favorable report.



Matt Morgan