



Councilman Mark Conway
Baltimore City Council *Fourth District*

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Feb 20, 2026

Chair and Members
House Ways and Means Committee
Maryland General Assembly
Annapolis, Maryland

RE: Letter of Support – House Bill 1142

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee:

I write in strong support of House Bill 1142, which establishes the Task Force to Modernize County and Municipal Revenue Structures. This legislation represents a necessary and forward-thinking step toward strengthening Maryland's local governments and ensuring that jurisdictions such as Baltimore City have the tools needed to meet growing service demands in a fiscally responsible manner.

County governments are responsible for the vast majority of local public services, accounting for over 95% of total local government expenditures statewide. In Baltimore City, these responsibilities include public safety, sanitation, local transportation infrastructure, public health, parks and recreation, and substantial contributions toward education and other mandated services.

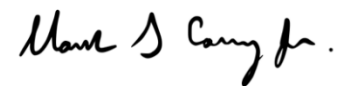
Yet our primary locally generated revenue sources remain heavily concentrated in property and income taxes. This narrow structure places disproportionate pressure on homeowners and wage earners, particularly in urban jurisdictions with high service needs and constrained tax bases. It also limits flexibility during economic downturns, when income and transaction-based revenues can fluctuate significantly.

HB 1142 recognizes that our revenue systems were not designed for the modern economic landscape and they must evolve. Rather than imposing mandates, this bill creates a data-driven framework for informed policymaking. The inclusion of affordability and cost-of-living analysis within the Task Force's charge is also critical. Revenue modernization must be balanced with equity and economic competitiveness. This bill does not presume outcomes; it ensures that we fully understand the impacts before acting.

Modernizing local revenue structures is not about raising taxes indiscriminately. It is about fairness, flexibility, and sustainability. It is about giving counties and municipalities the tools necessary to meet their obligations without overburdening residents or undermining economic growth.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark S Conway Jr." with a period at the end. The signature is written in a cursive style.

Mark S. Conway, Jr.