

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF BILL# 25-0036

Property Taxes – Baltimore City Payment in Lieu of Taxes Task Force

May 13, 2025

Yona Gorelick
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TO: Chair McCray, Vice Chair Schleifer, and Members of the Budget & Appropriations Committee

FROM: Yona Gorelick

My name is Yona Gorelick. I am a resident of Baltimore City District 7. I am submitting this testimony in support of Council Bill 25-0036 - Baltimore City Payment in Lieu of Taxes Task Force, and I urge a favorable report with no weakening amendments.

I care about the passage of this bill without weakening amendments because I care about Baltimore City and the people who live here. In the last 48 hours alone, I've had numerous glimpses of what our city's residents stand to gain from a more equitable PILOT agreement, developed through a transparent process by a representative task force.

I attended a community event, and I considered traveling via public transit. The 2.5-mile distance would have taken me as long to traverse via public transit as walking the whole way. I passed a patched-up piece of roadway that, despite multiple calls to 311, had until recently had a leak for several months, including through the winter, creating icy conditions. I toured a community farm in my neighborhood that makes fresh and healthy produce freely available to community members whose basic needs are not being met in other ways. The farm could expand its positive impact with more robust partnership from the city, such as a restoration of access to a nearby water source for irrigation.

It does not make sense to me that individual CEOs are compensated in higher amounts than what their institutions commit to the city in the existing PILOT agreement.

When we all contribute our fair share, we all do better. I look forward to Baltimoreans thriving, in healthier communities, with a more fair PILOT agreement, established by a more fair and transparent task force process.

I respectfully urge this committee to pass Council Bill #25-0036 without any weakening amendments.