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Testimony In Support Of Bill# 25-0036

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

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

FROM: Devin Krol

My name is Devin Krol. 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 am a lifelong resident of Baltimore County but much of my time throughout my life has taken place in Baltimore City. I work in Baltimore City in childcare, my mother was a Baltimore City Public School special educator for 44 years, and I love the culture of the city- spending much of my free time there as well. I am a member of the Jewish community, attending Jewish day school as a child, and now I am a member of a justice action group made up of Jewish people across the state.

There is a Jewish value called "arevut," these are a series of laws encouraging commitment of mutual aid and devotion among one's community. The proposed bill #25-0036 would set Baltimore up for success by forming a community-driven PILOT task force that is fair, transparent, and timely. Baltimore needs a more equitable PILOT agreement, so that all of our City's institutions contribute towards the cost of the city services they utilize. With each institution involved paying their fair share, we will be able to take better care of our greater Baltimore City community.

The Baltimore Banner published an article in February of this year titled "Transit nightmare: Thousands of Baltimore kids can't get to school on time" written by Liz Bowie and Greg Morton. With a truly equitable PILOT agreement, we could provide school buses for our middle and high school children. Our kids could get to school on time and safely, as the article states "They [the students] stand in drenching rain, endure sexual harassment from strangers and witness violent fights on buses." If we, as the adults, ignore this we are falling majorly short of following community devotion and the laws of arevut. This is just one example of the countless issues we face as a Baltimore community that could be addressed by a fair share PILOT agreement, as outlined in Bill #25-0036.

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