

May 13, 2025

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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: Zackary Berger, MD, PhD

I am Zackary Berger, a resident of Baltimore City District 11. I am submitting this testimony in support of Council Bill 25-0036- Baltimore City Payment in Lieu of Taxes Task Force, and urge a favorable report with no weakening amendments.

As a primary care physician who treats some of Baltimore's most vulnerable, and a faculty member at one of Baltimore's most prestigious institutions, Johns Hopkins, I see how these institutions' exemption from most taxes hurts our city.

So many of my patients are hurt because they don't have basics of life that Baltimore lacks funding to ensure: housing, transportation, schooling, public health.

I work in a hospital whose CEOs are paid millions and is exempted from taxes in order to provide free care to its neighbors. The institution does not do nearly as much of that as is required by law. If it paid the taxes it was supposed to, my patients would be healthier.

Passing this bill would let Baltimore, like other cities, reach a transparent agreement with its anchor institutions which depend on the city and should contribute their fair share to its wellbeing.

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

**Zackary Berger, MD PhD**