

Baltimore City Council



Budget & Appropriations

Committee

Bill: 25-0058

Title: Fair Wages for Tipped Employees

Public Testimony

From: Christyn Locke <christynlocke@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 15, 2025 11:26 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: Council bill 25-0058

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Dear Councilmember Cohen,

I'm a server, and I've heard the Baltimore City Council is considering Council Bill 25-0058, which would eliminate the tip credit. I've been in this industry for a long time, and I can tell you getting rid of the tip credit is a bad idea. Please vote against this bill.

I chose to be a server because of the flexible hours and, most importantly, the high pay that comes with tips. If the tip credit goes away, my pay will drop because most restaurants will replace tipping with a service charge and just pay a flat hourly wage. Most customers don't tip on top of service charges, so I'd be making less money. On top of that, restaurants might have to cut staff or reduce shifts to cover the higher costs, which means even fewer opportunities to earn.

Please don't force me to take a pay cut. The tip credit system works.

Regards,
Christyn Locke
Sent from my iPhone

From: Nykki Florez <ms.florez90@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 15, 2025 10:09 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: Reject council Bill 25-0058

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Please don't force me to take a pay cut. The tip credit system works.

Regards,
Melissa Suter

From: Nykki Florez <ms.florez90@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 15, 2025 10:11 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: Reject Council Bill 25-0058

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Please don't force me to take a pay cut. The tip credit system works.

Regards
Nicole Florez

From: sam devecchis <samdevecchis@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 17, 2025 12:31 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: tipping in baltimore

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Dear Councilmember,

I'm asking you to vote against Council Bill 25-0058 because getting rid of the tip credit in Baltimore City would seriously hurt my income.

I work as a server because the flexible hours and great tips make it worth it. In most restaurants, servers are some of the highest-paid staff, so I don't get why people are trying to mess with a system that works. If the tip credit goes away, restaurants will likely switch to service charges and pay a flat hourly wage. And let's be real, most customers don't tip on top of a service charge. That means I'd end up making less money.

The tip credit works. The current system works. Please don't change it.

Regards,
samantha pratt
2801 8th St
Sparrows Point, MD 21219

From: Topy <ayetopy@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 15, 2025 9:23 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: Tip Credit Testimony

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Please don't force me to take a pay cut. The tip credit system works.

Regards,
Melissa Suter
3461 McShane Way
Dundalk, MD 21222

From: Elena Pappas <elena@mamasmd.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 7, 2025 5:20 PM
To: District 7 Staff <District7Staff@baltimorecity.gov>
Subject: Oppose Council Bill 25-0058

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Good afternoon, Council President Cohen, Councilman Parker, and all distinguished members of Council,

I am writing to you today as a member of Council District 1, the Canton neighborhood, and a member of the Mama's on the Half Shell family. Our family owned and operated restaurant has been serving the Canton and Baltimore City neighborhoods for over 22 years. We were no strangers to the hospitality industry, as we opened our sister restaurant, Nacho Mama's back in 1994. We were happy to share the same block on O'Donnell Street together for over 22 years. It brought us to tears when we had to close the doors of Nacho Mama's in January of 2025. The Baltimore City community that embraced us with open arms when we opened back in 1994 had become our home and we put our hearts and souls into every dish and drink that we served to the Canton community. Our staff became our family and when we lost Nacho's we lost a piece of that family. We tried to bring as many people as we could into our Half Shell family as soon as Nacho Mama's closed. We have a dedicated staff of 50 people that help make Mama's on the Half Shell a seafood destination for all those that come and visit our great city. I am writing this letter in opposition of proposed Council Bill 25-0058. I firmly believe that the tip credit is critical to my business and my employees.

If the tip credit is eliminated, it will be detrimental to our small business. We employ ten bartenders and servers at our Canton location. If they each work an average of 25 hours per week then that equates to \$47,190 per year just in base pay. If the tip credit were taken away and each server/bartender made minimum wage that would raise the base pay to \$130,000 per year. Our restaurant would be paying out over \$82,810 per year in additional base pay. This is not something that will be able to sustain us and I am fearful that we may have to close our doors. We work hard for every dollar that we earn and we will have nothing left to show from it if the tip credit is eliminated. We employ several single parents and single caregivers at our restaurant, I am so scared as to what this will do to them financially. Most of our tipped employees make on average \$43.00 an hour currently, if the tip credit is eliminated, they will be making \$15.00 an hour but their tips will be far less than they are now. If we have to pay a higher base pay rate for all of our front of house employees we will need to raise our prices to the customers. This will undoubtedly result in fewer customers coming into our restaurant. In raising our prices, we will also have to add on service charges to the bill which will also lead to reduced incentive for great service. This tip credit elimination would be the worst thing for our small family-owned business. We would have to cut our staff's hours (more than we already have), raise prices for our valued customers, and explain to our staff why they don't have the money they are accustomed to for their families. Please do not put us in this position. Baltimore City has been our home, our friend, and our ally for over 30 years. Please don't turn your backs on us now when we need you the most.

Please vote no to Council Bill 25-0058. Preserve the tip credit at all costs. We promise to keep serving the City of Baltimore with honesty, integrity, and care the only way Mama's on the Half Shell knows how.

Respectfully,

Elena Pappas | Office Manager

The Mama's Restaurant Group
[Mama's on the Half Shell](#)

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Elena Pappas | Office Manager
The Mama's Restaurant Group
[Mama's on the Half Shell](#)
[410-218-6595](tel:410-218-6595) | elena@mamasmd.com

