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BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

Mission Statement

The Budget and Appropriations Committee (BA) is responsible for ensuring taxpayer dollars are expended prudently and equitably. BA will exercise regular oversight of the funding and spending practices of City agencies, the City's budget, expenditures, loans, and other financial matters. The committee's areas of jurisdiction include all budgets & appropriations, taxation, financial services, consumer protection, audits, and the Comptroller's Office.

The Honorable Danielle McCray

Chairwoman

PUBLIC HEARING

**TUESDAY, MAY 13, 2025
10:00 AM**

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Council Bill 25-0036

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

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BILL SYNOPSIS

Committee: Budget and Appropriations

Bill: 25-0036

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

Sponsor: Councilmember Porter, et al

Introduced: March 10, 2025

Purpose:

For the purpose of establishing the Baltimore City Payment in Lieu of Taxes Task Force; providing for the membership, staffing, compensation, and procedures of the Task Force; establishing the duties of the Task Force; requiring a certain annual report; defining terms; and generally relating to the Baltimore City Payment in Lieu of Taxes Task Force.

Effective:

- takes effect on June 1, 2025
- 1st task force meeting to be held no later than July 31, 2025

Agency Reports

Law Department	Favorable - form & legal sufficiency
Department of Finance	None as of this writing
Office of the Comptroller	None as of this writing

Analysis

Current Law

I. Article 28 – Taxes, Under the Baltimore City Code outlines the rules, standards and mandates for Taxes

If enacted, this Ordinance would add a new section (**Subtitle 13. Payment in Lieu of Taxes Task Force**) to the Baltimore City Code.

II. State Law – 7-501 of the State Tax – Property Article

§7–501. (a) The governing body of Allegany County, Anne Arundel County, Montgomery County, or Washington County or the governing body of a municipal corporation in those counties may authorize, by law, an exemption from county or municipal corporation property tax for the property that is described in § 6–102(e) of this article.

(b) Except for an interest in federal enclave property as defined in § 7–211.3 of this title, in all counties except Worcester County, the governing body of the county or of a municipal corporation in those counties or the **Mayor and City Council of Baltimore City** may authorize, by law, an exemption from county or municipal corporation property tax for the property described in § 6–102(e) of this article and provide for a negotiated payment in lieu of the tax. (c) Notwithstanding subsections (a) and (b) of this section, the assessment of any property exempted under subsections (a) and (b) of this section shall be included in the assessable base of the county or municipal corporation to determine the amount of any State aid that is based on the assessable base of the county or municipal corporation.

Background

This bill outlines the rules, standards and etc. for creating a Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) Task Force.

Some highlights of the Task Force are:

- Will operate under the Comptroller’s Office
- Will comprise of seventeen (17) members, ten (10) will be appointed by the Mayor and three (3) by the City Council President
- The bill outlines the requirements and/or conditions for appointing members as well as for appointing the ex-officio members.
- Members serve without compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for some expenses
- Members serve for a term of four (4) years or later until a successor is selected
- The bill outlines the responsibilities of the members
- An annual report will be required on or before December 31st of each year
- If enacted, the bill/task force takes effect on June 1, 2025
- The first meeting shall be convened no later than July 31, 2025, and
- Councilmember Phylicia Porter will serve as a member of the Task Force

Per Councilmember Porter, the primary sponsor of the bill, she is concerned that many residents do not know about PILOTS and want to make sure the public is aware of same.¹

Also see attached news article (recent) regarding PILOTS

Additional Information

Fiscal Note: None

Information Source(s): Baltimore City Code, State Law, Council Bill 25-0036 and all agency reports received as of this writing.

Analysis by: Marguerite M. Currin

Direct Inquiries to: (443) 984-3485

Analysis Date: May 9, 2025

¹ Comments from Councilmember Porter at the March 10, 2025 Council meeting.

Baltimore Brew – Thursday, April 24, 2025



by [Fern Shen](#) 10:48 am Apr 24, 2025

14 Baltimore anchor institutions urged to contribute more to help the city

Unions and community groups want these nonprofits to up the amount they pay under a 2016 PILOT agreement. Johns Hopkins University, the largest of these, argues its economic impact is already substantial

Above: Cristina Duncan Evans, teacher chair of the Baltimore Teachers Union, calls for Baltimore's nonprofits to pay more to the city. (Fern Shen)

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Since 2016, Baltimore's major nonprofit institutions have been contributing money to city government coffers to make up for an awkward fact – they don't pay any property taxes.

To a coalition of community advocates, neighborhood groups and union leaders, the amount these entities kick in doesn't come close to representing their fair share.

The designated group of 14 “anchor institutions” – including Johns Hopkins University, Mercy Medical Center, Loyola University and the University of Maryland Medical System – use more than \$47 million every year for fire and police protection, street and road maintenance and the like, according to a study by the Baltimore Department of Finance.

But these same institutions contribute only \$6 million annually to the city under the current agreement, coalition leaders noted at a rally early this week in Wyman Park.

If they paid out more, the coalition argues, municipal revenues would grow and help fund the essential services and cultural amenities that residents across the city depend on.

“These property taxes [would] pay for the Enoch Pratt Free Library, for after-school programs for our youth, for DPW, for our roads, for our public safety and for all of the important services that keep Baltimore city strong,” said Cristina Duncan Evans, teacher chair of the Baltimore Teachers Union, addressing a small crowd gathered at Tubman Grove.

Owning collectively more than \$5 billion worth of property in the city, the institutions would – if taxed – contribute about \$120 million a year in revenues, Evans said.

Her group, [With Us For Us](#), is promoting a first legislative step – passage of a City Council bill that would create a task force to renegotiate that 2016 PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) agreement with anchor institutions, which is up for renewal in 2026.

Duncan said the inequity is illustrated vividly by Baltimore's haves vs. have-nots landscape.

“We can see this in places across our city where the upgrades are happening, where the new buildings are popping up, where our anchor institutions are creating beautiful and increasingly exclusive enclaves – instead of investing in [the rest of] Baltimore City,” she said.



Lester Spence, a Johns Hopkins professor of political science and Africana studies, addresses the crowd. (Fern Shen)

Hopkins Responds

With Us For Us is targeting a wider group of nonprofits, not just Johns Hopkins, Duncan said. But it was hard not to see a message in the choice of the rally site – a stone’s throw from the Homewood campus of the city’s preeminent academic institution.

Asked to respond to the WUFU campaign, a Hopkins representative pointed to payments that extend beyond the \$3.2 million it makes in annual PILOT contributions.

“Johns Hopkins pays approximately \$8 million in water and sewer charges, almost \$19.7 million in other annual taxes and fees and \$26 million in income taxes for nearly 17,000 employees who are city residents,” the statement said.

With more than 41,000 employees, Johns Hopkins University and Hospital and Health System is the city’s largest private employer.

The university also pointed to the more than \$83 million in financial assistance that its hospitals provide each year to uninsured and underinsured patients.

Overall, Hopkins estimates it brings billions of dollars to the city, including “\$1.05 billion paid to Baltimore suppliers and contractors since fiscal year 2016.”

“Growing Baltimore’s tax base and driving economic activity in our city are the most important roles we can continue to serve for our hometown,” the statement concluded, making no specific mention of Bill 25-0036 introduced by Councilwoman Phylcia Porter last month.

Co-sponsored by President Zeke Cohen and a majority of the Council, the bill calls for a 17-member task force that would draft a standard payment formula for each institution, depending on use of services and other factors.

Signs at the rally called on Mayor Brandon Scott to “Stand With Us and For Us.” The mayor’s press office has not returned a request for comment on the bill.

Institution	Annual Pilot Payment
Grace Medical Center	\$74,880
Johns Hopkins Hospital & Bayview	\$1,399,972
Medstar Good Samaritan	\$149,348
Medstar Harbor Hospital	\$206,358
Medstar Union Memorial Hospital	\$202,616
Mercy Medical Center	\$226,208
Sinai Hospital	\$316,116
St. Agnes Hospital (Ascension Health Alliance)	\$190,462
UMMC & Shock Trauma & Rehab	\$746,576
UM Midtown	\$183,582
Johns Hopkins University	\$1,860,426
Loyola University	\$329,630
MICA	\$69,554
Notre Dame of Maryland	\$44,272

“They have the money”

Speakers at the rally pressed hospitals and universities to do more.

“We know that they have money – that their CEOs make millions and they pay expensive lobbyists,” said Antonia Brooks, a technician at one of the hospitals in the PILOT agreement.

Meanwhile, the people who keep hospitals running are overworked, underpaid and experience burnout as the cost of living rises, said Brooks, who said she is a lifetime East Baltimore resident whose job is to support patients on ventilators and aid them with their mobility.

Hopkins graduate student Melissa Kissling, pointing to the university’s endowment and budget surplus, echoed Brooks’ point.

“They work with an amount of money that guarantees security and power and in any fair system that comes with the responsibility to make positive impacts,” Kissling said.



Baltimore healthcare worker Antonia Brooks addresses a rally by the With Us For Us coalition. (Fern Shen)

In the Time of Trump

Meanwhile, colleges and universities are suffering financial pressures of their own, with the Trump administration ordering drastic reductions in federal research and other funding.

Hopkins is facing hundreds of millions in direct and indirect funding [cuts](#) that have already killed off international aid programs, triggered layoffs and thrown research projects into limbo.

So is WUFU's timing off?

The university's statement on the PILOT bill didn't raise this issue, but the coalition speakers did, arguing that average citizens are more vulnerable than big institutions to harsh mandates from Washington.

"We all know somebody who's been impacted by the cuts to federal funding, and it's a life or death choice where people don't always have an endowment to fall back on," Duncan said.

She asked coalition members and people in the crowd if they or anyone they knew in their family had been hurt by federal funding cuts or other Trump actions.

More than half of those present raised their hands.

AGENCY REPORTS
Council Bill: 25-0036

See attached

CITY OF BALTIMORE

BRANDON M. SCOTT
Mayor



DEPARTMENT OF LAW
EBONY M. THOMPSON, CITY SOLICITOR
100 N. HOLLIDAY STREET
SUITE 101, CITY HALL
BALTIMORE, MD 21202

April 7, 2025

The Honorable President and Members
of the Baltimore City Council
Attn: Executive Secretary
Room 409, City Hall
100 N. Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Re: City Council Bill 25-0036 – Property Taxes – Baltimore City Payment in Lieu of Taxes Task Force

Dear President and City Council Members:

The Law Department has reviewed City Council Bill 25-0036 for form and legal sufficiency. The bill would require the creation of a Task Force to study the City's implementation of the state real property tax law authorizing Payments in Lieu of Taxes. The City has the general welfare power to create such a task force. City Charter, Art. II, § (47). The bill should clarify if the ex-officio members are part of the quorum or can vote.

The Law Department's seat on the task force could be a conflict of interest since the Law Department is the legal representative of the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore, which includes its task forces. City Charter, Art. I, § 1; Art. VII, § 24; Md. Rule 19-301.7, note 34 (organizational client conflicts); Md. Rule 19-301.13 (Organization as Client); Md. Rule 19-301.11 (Special Conflict of Interest for Current and Former Government Officers and Employees). The bill should be amended to remove line 20 on page 3.

Assuming the bill is amended, the Law Department can approve the bill for form and legal sufficiency.

Very truly yours,

Hilary Ruley
Chief Solicitor

cc: Ebony M. Thompson, City Solicitor
Ty'lor Schnella, Mayor's Office of Government Relations
Ashlea Brown, Chief Solicitor
Jeffrey Hochstetler, Chief Solicitor
Michele Toth, Assistant Solicitor
Desiree Lucky, Assistant Solicitor

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 25-0036
(First Reader)**

Introduced by: Councilmember Porter

Cosponsored by: Councilmembers Conway, Middleton, Torrence, Gray, Blanchard, Jones,
Ramos, Dorsey, Bullock and President Cohen

Introduced and read first time: March 10, 2025

Assigned to: Budget and Appropriations Committee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: City Solicitor, Department of Finance, Office of the
Comptroller

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ORDINANCE concerning

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

3 FOR the purpose of establishing the Baltimore City Payment in Lieu of Taxes Task Force;
4 providing for the membership, staffing, compensation, and procedures of the Task Force;
5 establishing the duties of the Task Force; requiring a certain annual report; defining certain
6 terms; and generally relating to the Baltimore City Payment in Lieu of Taxes Task Force.

7 BY adding

8 Article 28 - Taxes

9 Sections 13-1 through 13-7, to be under the new subtitle designation,

10 “Subtitle 13. Payment in Lieu of Taxes Task Force”

11 Baltimore City Code

12 (Edition 2000)

13 **SECTION 1. BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the
14 Laws of Baltimore City read as follows:

15 **Baltimore City Code**

16 **Article 28. Taxes**

17 ***Division II: Property Tax***

18 **SUBTITLE 13. PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TAXES TASK FORCE**

19 **§ 13-1. DEFINITIONS.**

20 (A) *IN GENERAL.*

21 IN THIS SUBTITLE, THE FOLLOWING TERMS HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS indicate matter added to existing law.
[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Council Bill 25-0036

(B) *AMI*.

“AMI” MEANS THE AREA MEDIAN INCOME FOR THE METROPOLITAN REGION THAT ENCOMPASSES BALTIMORE CITY, AS PUBLISHED AND ANNUALLY UPDATED BY THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT.

(C) *ENABLING LAW*.

“ENABLING LAW” MEANS § 7-501 OF THE STATE TAX – PROPERTY ARTICLE.

(D) *PARTICIPATING INSTITUTION*.

“PARTICIPATING INSTITUTION” MEANS A CORPORATE ENTITY THAT IS NEGOTIATING OR HAS AGREED TO A PILOT AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY.

(E) *PILOT*.

“PILOT” MEANS NEGOTIATED PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF PROPERTY TAXES, AS AUTHORIZED BY THE ENABLING LAW.

(F) *PILOT AGREEMENT*.

“PILOT AGREEMENT” MEANS AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN A PARTICIPATING INSTITUTION AND THE CITY PROVIDING FOR NEGOTIATED PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF PROPERTY TAXES.

(G) *TASK FORCE*.

“TASK FORCE” MEANS THE PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TAXES TASK FORCE.

§ 13-2. ESTABLISHMENT.

THERE IS A PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TAXES TASK FORCE IN THE OFFICE OF THE CITY COMPTROLLER.

§ 13-3. COMPOSITION.

(A) *IN GENERAL*.

THE TASK FORCE COMPRISES 17 MEMBERS.

(B) *VOTING MEMBERS*.

(1) 10 MEMBERS APPOINTED BY THE MAYOR IN ACCORDANCE WITH CITY CHARTER ARTICLE IV, § 6, INCLUDING:

(I) 5 UNION REPRESENTATIVES NOMINATED BY THE METRO BALTIMORE AFL-CIO COUNCIL THAT REPRESENT BALTIMORE CITY HOSPITAL, PRIVATE UNIVERSITY, OR PUBLIC SECTOR WORKERS;

(II) 2 REPRESENTATIVES FROM A HOSPITAL WITH MORE THAN 500 BEDS;

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(III) 1 REPRESENTATIVE FROM A HOSPITAL WITH FEWER THAN 500 BEDS; AND

(IV) 2 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MARYLAND INDEPENDENT COLLEGE AND
UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATION;

(2) 3 MEMBERS NOMINATED BY THE CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT AND APPOINTED BY THE
MAYOR IN ACCORDANCE WITH CITY CHARTER ARTICLE IV, § 6, WHO SHALL:

(I) BE BALTIMORE CITY RESIDENTS;

(II) HAVE AN ANNUAL INCOME AT OR BELOW 100% AMI; AND

(III) RESIDE IN DIFFERENT DISTRICTS OF THE CITY COUNCIL;

(3) THE CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT OR THE CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S
DESIGNEE;

(4) THE CITY COMPTROLLER OR THE CITY COMPTROLLER'S DESIGNEE;

(5) THE MAYOR OR THE MAYOR'S DESIGNEE; AND

(6) A MEMBER OF THE BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL.

(C) *EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS.*

THE EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCE ARE COMPRISED OF THE FOLLOWING
INDIVIDUALS:

(1) THE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE OR THE DIRECTOR'S DESIGNEE;

(2) THE COMMISSIONER OF THE BALTIMORE CITY HEALTH DEPARTMENT OR THE
COMMISSIONER'S DESIGNEE;

(3) THE CITY SOLICITOR OR THE CITY SOLICITOR'S DESIGNEE; AND

(4) THE COMMISSIONER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT OR THE COMMISSIONER'S DESIGNEE.

§ 13-4. TERMS; ORGANIZATION.

(A) *TERMS.*

MEMBERS SERVE FOR A TERM OF 4 YEARS, CONCURRENT WITH THE MAYOR'S TERM OF
OFFICE.

(B) *VACANCIES.*

(1) AT THE END OF A TERM, A MEMBER SERVES UNTIL A SUCCESSOR IS SELECTED AND
QUALIFIES.

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(2) A MEMBER WHO IS SELECTED AFTER A TERM HAS BEGUN SERVES FOR THE REST OF THE TERM AND UNTIL A SUCCESSOR IS SELECTED AND QUALIFIES.

(C) *COMPENSATION.*

A MEMBER OF THE TASK FORCE:

(1) SERVES WITHOUT COMPENSATION; BUT

(2) IS ENTITLED TO REIMBURSEMENT FOR REASONABLE EXPENSES INCURRED IN THE PERFORMANCE OF THE MEMBER'S DUTIES, AS PROVIDED IN THE ORDINANCE OF ESTIMATES.

(D) *OFFICERS.*

(1) BY MAJORITY VOTE OF THE VOTING MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCE, THE TASK FORCE SHALL ELECT A CHAIR FROM AMONG ITS MEMBERS.

(2) THE CHAIR MAY SELECT OTHER OFFICERS.

(E) *QUORUM.*

A MAJORITY OF THE MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCE QUALIFIES AS A QUORUM FOR TRANSACTION OF BUSINESS.

(F) *VOTING.*

AN AFFIRMATIVE VOTE FROM AT LEAST A MAJORITY OF MEMBERS IS NEEDED TO APPROVE ANY OFFICIAL ACTION.

(G) *MEETINGS.*

THE TASK FORCE:

(1) SHALL MEET AT THE CALL OF THE CHAIR; BUT

(2) SHALL MEET AT LEAST ONCE A MONTH.

§ 13-5. STAFF.

THE COMPTROLLER SHALL ASSIGN STAFF FROM THE OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER TO SERVE AS STAFF TO THE TASK FORCE TO PROVIDE ADMINISTRATIVE AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT.

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§ 13-6. DUTIES.

THE TASK FORCE SHALL:

- (1) RECOMMEND A STANDARD FORMULA BY WHICH PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES SHALL BE DETERMINED FOR EACH TAX-EXEMPT HOSPITAL AND UNIVERSITY IN THE CITY THAT TAKES INTO CONSIDERATION AN INSTITUTION'S TOTAL PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION AND USE OF CITY SERVICES;
- (2) PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS ON LEGISLATIVE CHANGES NEEDED AT THE CITY OR STATE LEVEL RELATED TO PILOT;
- (3) PUBLISH PUBLIC REPORTS ON THE STATUS OF ANNUAL PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES OF EACH PARTICIPATING INSTITUTION IN COLLABORATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE;
- (4) EDUCATE BALTIMORE CITY RESIDENTS ABOUT PILOT AGREEMENTS, THE TASK FORCE, AND THE IMPACT THAT PROPERTY TAXES HAVE ON THE CITY BUDGET; AND
- (5) EDUCATE BALTIMORE CITY RESIDENTS ABOUT ANY EXISTING PILOT AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE CITY AND PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS.

§ 13-7. ANNUAL REPORT.

ON BEFORE DECEMBER 31 OF EACH YEAR, THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE, WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF THE TASK FORCE, SHALL SUBMIT A REPORT TO THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DETAILING:

- (1) THE RECOMMENDED STANDARD FORMULA FOR PILOT AGREEMENTS AS REQUIRED BY §13-6(1) OF THIS SUBTITLE;
- (2) THE ANNUAL PAYMENTS MADE BY EACH PARTICIPATING INSTITUTION UNDER THE TERMS OF A PILOT AGREEMENT;
- (3) THE STATUS OF FULFILLMENT OF EACH PARTICIPATING INSTITUTION'S OBLIGATIONS UNDER A PILOT AGREEMENT; AND
- (4) ANY OTHER INFORMATION REQUESTED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, That Councilmember Phylicia Porter shall serve as the member of the City Council on the Task Force under § 13-3(b)(6) of this Ordinance for the initial term of the Task Force.

SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, That the Baltimore City PILOT Task Force shall convene its first meeting no later than July 31, 2025.

SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, That this Ordinance takes effect on June 1, 2025.