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Working Families Win in Special Session

*Income tax code now more progressive, many vital investments
in education, health care preserved*

[Annapolis, MD] – Progressive Maryland, the statewide advocacy group that defends working families, offered praise for the outcome of the special legislative session that concluded last night.

“The bottom line is that working families are better off now than before,” said Sean Dobson, executive director of Progressive Maryland. “What emerged from the special session is a double win for blue collar families, offering more effective public services and fairer taxes as well.”

“First and foremost, the Governor and the General Assembly achieved the critically important goal of finding new revenues for education, health care, and other top priorities,” said Progressive Maryland’s Baltimore Region Director Matthew Weinstein. “These investments are vital for the prosperity and quality of life of average working Marylanders. Increased state resources for these areas will lay the foundation for Maryland’s future success by ensuring that we have a workforce that is better educated, healthier, and more productive, as well as protecting the quality of life that Marylanders expect.”

Mr. Weinstein went on, “Second, the income tax reform legislation enacted during the special session moves Maryland’s tax structure in a more progressive direction, ending the essentially flat income tax that has existed for decades. The new legislation changes Maryland’s brackets for the first time in 40 years. It reduces income taxes for most Marylanders by raising the personal exemption from \$2400 to \$3200. At the same time, it introduces new tax rates for the wealthiest more commensurate with their ability to play their appropriate role in financing vital public services.”

PM’s Executive Director Sean Dobson offered praise and declared that more work remains: “Progressive Maryland has been the lead organization for the last five years working for tax fairness, so yesterday’s victory is gratifying. But of course none of this would have happened without the leadership of Governor Martin O’Malley and House of Delegates Speaker Michael Busch. But there’s still more work to do. For reasons we can’t understand, the State Senate decided to let off scot-free many giant multistate corporations that pay no state income tax by failing to enact combined reporting, the proven reform that comprehensively closes tax loopholes. But we will keep fighting for that long-overdue reform, and we will win.”

Progressive Maryland advocates for working families and led the successful fight earlier this year to make Maryland the first state in the nation to enact a living wage requirement for state contracts.

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