

Alliance For Tax Fairness

“Investment in Maryland’s Future”

www.AllianceForTaxFairness.org

News Release

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Contact:

- Sean Dobson, Progressive Maryland, 301-495-7004
- Donna Victoria, Goodwin Simon Victoria Research, Inc. (pollster)

Maryland Students, Nurse, Business Owner, Other Citizens Demand State Budget Not Be Balanced At Expense of Working Families and Environment

Big corporations and wealthy individuals should pay fair share so Maryland can invest in its future, say advocates

Annapolis, MD. At a news conference today in front of an Annapolis fire station, a diverse group of Marylanders and advocacy organizations called on lawmakers to resolve the state’s fiscal crisis in a way that benefits working families and the environment.

“To close the deficit, lawmakers have already cut several hundred million from a budget that was lean to begin with,” said Matthew Weinstein, Baltimore regional director of Progressive Maryland. “If they cut more, it will come at the expense of vital public services, such as the fire station behind me.”

“Delivering health care to seniors is becoming more and more difficult because costs keep going up and funding is never adequate,” said Carolyn Taylor-Chester, a certified nursing assistant and certified medicine assistant at Wesley Nursing Home in Baltimore. “Maryland should expand health care coverage, not shrink it.”

“Tuition has finally stabilized at Maryland’s public universities after years of hikes, so my parents can now afford to send me to college,” said Chris Caruso, an undergraduate at University of Maryland-College Park. “But if Maryland goes back to double digit tuition hikes, it would put a big financial burden on my whole family.”

“Further budget cuts make no sense considering that Maryland is a wealthy yet low-tax and small government state,” said Weinstein, who displayed a thick binder of research backing up his claim. “Maryland must and can raise the revenue to invest in a future of safe streets, expanded health care coverage, and world-class schools.”

Sean Dobson, Executive Director of Progressive Maryland, released a new opinion poll showing that Marylanders support this approach. “Maryland taxes corporate income and income of highest-earning individuals at some of the lowest effective levels in the country, yet we have many unmet needs in funding education, health care, and protecting the environment,” said Dobson. “By more than a 3:1 margin, Marylanders want lawmakers to go beyond plugging the hole in the budget and create a fairer tax system that asks big corporations and individuals to invest in Maryland’s future.”

“Comptroller Franchot revealed this week that fully half of the biggest corporations in the state pay no income tax at all, even though they are supposed to pay 7% on profits,” said Jim Martin, owner of Free State Press, a local company in Annapolis. “Multi-state corporations exploit tax loopholes to avoid paying Maryland taxes. That puts local businesses like mine at an unfair disadvantage. Maryland should make sure big corporations cannot hide their profits and instead make them pay their fair share.”

“The wealthiest people in Maryland have received large federal tax cuts from President George W. Bush,” said Dobson. “It is only fair that we ask them to invest some of that in a better future for Maryland.”

The poll also showed a large majority of Marylanders favoring taxes on developers, which generate revenue and help protect the environment.

The poll results are available at www.AllianceForTaxFairness.org

The groups at the press conference – including Maryland League of Conservation Voters, Maryland State Teachers Association, Service Employees International Union, League of Women Voters, AFSCME, 1000 Friends of Maryland, Md. Association of Nonprofit Organization, and Progressive Maryland – are working together as the Alliance For Tax Fairness. They are mobilizing their thousands of members, educating the general public, and lobbying lawmakers with the goal of making big corporations and wealthy individuals pay their fair share so Maryland can close the budget deficit and increase public investment in health care, emergency first response, education, and the environment.

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