

Sayers, Margery

From: susan crovo <scrovo@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 28, 2019 8:42 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Proposed "fire" tax

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

From what I have read about this tax, it will raise our taxes substantially. Have you considered another avenue to use instead of raising taxes? As it is, our taxes are barely manageable and an increase will put a lot of homeowners in jeopardy. I would think that you would want to keep responsible homeowners who pay taxes instead of bankrupting them.

I hope you will consider another alternative.

Sincerely,

Susan Crovo
8115B Yellow Pine Dr
21043

Sent from my iPad

Sayers, Margery

From: Darlene Affinito <daraffinito@verizon.net>
Sent: Tuesday, May 28, 2019 8:56 AM
To: CouncilMail
Cc: Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David; Walsh, Elizabeth; Jones, Opel
Subject: Proposed fire tax increase

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

I am writing to let you know of my and my husband's opposition to this proposed huge tax increase. The residence of this county are already severely over taxed. My property taxes are obscene compared to most other counties . Most people I know who are thinking of retirement in the next 10 years are planning on leaving this county. It is unfortunate because it is a beautiful county.

If you feel that you must raise taxes for this, it should be raised on the new developers and the new home prices that are causing this. I know for myself and most of my friends we will keep voting out people that constantly propose these taxes. You already have a problem with the education mess up. You should concentrate on that

For once why don't people listen to the taxpayers and what they want. Thank you

Darlene and Dominic Affinito

Darlene Affinito
daraffinito@verizon.net

Sayers, Margery

From: Xiaowei Song <dawnwei.song@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 28, 2019 8:48 AM
To: Yungmann, David; CouncilMail
Subject: Oppose to fire tax increase

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Council Representatives or David Yungmann of my district #5,

I understand funds are needed to build the two new fire stations. But the proposed fire tax increase is a shocking 34% increase. It is beyond what we can bear.

Actually, there are different ways to fund this project to reduce the increase, for example, partially funded by Capital Budget, issue bonds.

Further, the two fire stations don't need to be built at the same time. We should build them one at a time, therefore, the fire tax increase don't have to increase at once.

Please work on this matter on our behalf.

Best Regards,
Xiaowei Song

Sayers, Margery

From: Jing Leng <jleng07@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 27, 2019 9:54 PM
To: Jung, Deb; CouncilMail
Subject: 34% fire tax increase

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear County Council members,

I heard Howard County fire tax proposed a 6-cent increase to help pay for two new fire stations and the support needed to run them. I understand it is very important to improve the cost and emergency response efficiency for public safety. However, I don't see increasing fire tax by 34% is the best or the only way to resolve the problem.

The 34% increase of fire tax causes current fire tax rate from \$0.176 to \$0.236 for each \$100 of assessed property value. In my opinion, our current fire tax rate of \$0.176 is already way too high compared to \$0.107 in Montgomery County and \$0.064 in Charles County.

To make our county a better place to live is the responsibility of every resident. However, when big decisions that impact every family are made, like tax increasing, could county government give us reasonable explanations?

Best regards,

Jing, a resident at district 4

Sayers, Margery

From: Sherry Chen <schen089@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 27, 2019 9:26 PM
To: CouncilMail; Walsh, Elizabeth; Jones, Opel; Rigby, Christiana; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David
Subject: Oppose to fire tax increase

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear County Council Members,

My address is 11240 Whithorn Way, Ellicott City, MD 21042. I heard fire tax increase is proposed to build the two new fire stations. The painful thing living in Maryland is that proposed tax stays forever. Building two fire stations is a project. So once the project is finished, the tax rate should go back to the current percentage. For example, if the tax increase is 34%, then it should be one year only. If fire tax increase is 17%, then it should be two years only. If fire tax increase is 11%, then it should be 3 years only. Please work with the county executive to have a plan that will impose minimal impact on residents.

Best Regards,
Sherry Chen

Sayers, Margery

From: Rebecca Stratis <bstratis@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, May 27, 2019 9:14 PM
To: CouncilMail; Walsh, Elizabeth; Jones, Opel; Rigby, Christiana; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David
Subject: Proposed fire tax

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Good evening!

There seems to be a growing concern over this proposed fire tax.

First, have other options besides property taxes been considered as sources of funding? If not, why not?

Secondly, is the proposed timeline a necessity, especially if other sources of funding can play a part?

Next, is an increase of almost 50% in the number of fire stations needed or is it more that more EMS services are needed? Has a cost benefit analysis been run to see if increasing EMS services works? Is it true that only 20 of 2200 calls in April were fire-related?

However, the most important question relates to the fact that this is a permanent increase in property taxes. What happens as the money continues to flow after the six year build period for new fire houses?

Retirees on fixed incomes are being hit on every front already - from health care to increased federal and state taxes along with the general rise in prices at stores, gas stations, etc. However, pensions do not rise.

Lastly, this does not make sense when other county organizations such as the school district will be given significantly less support and the funding for the OEC flood plan is unknown.

I hope you make sure you dig into the information, consider carefully and act as prudent stewards of public money.

Thank you,
Rebecca Stratis

Sayers, Margery

From: Qiang Fu <fuqiang0316@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 27, 2019 8:54 PM
To: CouncilMail; Walsh, Elizabeth; Jones, Opel; Rigby, Christiana; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David
Subject: Oppose to fire tax increase

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear County Council Members,

As a resident in District 5, I'm writing to express my opposition to the fire increase. Maryland is already one of the heavily taxed states in the country and Howard county residents are carry extreme high property taxes due to high home prices. Please vote against the fire tax increase!

Best Regards,
Qiang Fu

Sayers, Margery

From: Susan Wrightson <shadowofthewing@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 27, 2019 7:37 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Fire Tax

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

I am against the proposed budget to increase the fire tax in Howard County to build two new fire stations. I do believe this can and should be funded by other options such as Capital Budget or bonds. This increase seems permanent which is unjustifiable and I strongly oppose it.

Sincerely,

Martha Wrightson

Sayers, Margery

From: Kejing Chen <jing_dan@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 27, 2019 3:16 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Oppose to fire tax increase

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear County Council,

As a resident in Howard County, I'm writing to express my opposition to the fire tax increase. Maryland is already one of the heavily taxed states in the country and Howard county residents are carry extreme high property taxes. The tax increase will further increase the financial burden of the working families. Please vote against the fire tax increase!

Sincerely,

Colin Chen
2004 Crescent Moon Court
Woodstock, MD 21163

Sayers, Margery

From: Doug Walton <dougwalton21@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 27, 2019 2:53 PM
To: CouncilMail; Walsh, Elizabeth; Jones, Opel; Rigby, Christiana; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David
Subject: Fire tax - in favor

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Ladies and gentlemen of the Council;

I come to you not as a civilian employee of HCDFRS, but as a taxpayer in Columbia. While some of my neighbors have been quick to voice their concern about the raise in the fire tax, I feel it is of paramount importance to fully fund HCDFRS. We have worked tirelessly to overcome long response times, and building -and properly staffing - firehouses is a way to deliver prompt, professional emergency services to those in need, when they need it. We must also work to increase staffing on the apparatus - those of who who participated in Fire Ops 101 saw how much work fire and EMS activities take.

I also believe that the choice to discontinue HCPD Aviation Unit was a serious mistake.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Doug Walton
Dorsey's Search

Sayers, Margery

From: Jessie Chan <jcforhisglory@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 27, 2019 12:55 PM
To: CouncilMail; Walsh, Elizabeth; Jones, Opel; Rigby, Christiana; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David
Subject: Oppose fire tax increase

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear County Council Members,

As a resident in Howard County, I'm writing to express my opposition to the fire increase. Maryland is already one of the heavily taxed states in the country and Howard county residents are carry extreme high property taxes due to high home prices. Please vote against the fire tax increase!

Best Regards,

Jessie Zhao and Philip Chan
4955 Windpower Way
Ellicott City MD 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: gang li <onlyuli@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, May 27, 2019 11:54 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Oppose to fire tax increase

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear County Council Members,

As a resident in District #1, I'm writing to express my opposition to the fire tax increase. I understand funds are needed to build the two new fire stations but I am shocked to hear the proposed fire tax increase by 34%. It is beyond what we can bear, plus there are other ways to fund this project to avoid this proposal such as using Capital Budget or issuing bonds. In addition, the two fire stations don't need to be built at the same time. If we build them one at a time, it will reduce the funding requirement and make the situation easier to deal with. Maryland is already one of the heavily taxed states in the country and Howard county residents are carrying extreme high property taxes due to higher home price. Please vote against the fire tax increase! Thank you!

Best Regards,

Gang Li

Sayers, Margery

From: hzhou1022@gmail.com
Sent: Monday, May 27, 2019 11:43 AM
To: CouncilMail; Walsh, Elizabeth; Jones, Opel; Rigby, Christiana; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David
Subject: Regarding increasing fire tax

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear County Council members,

I heard Howard County fire tax proposed a 6-cent increase to redesign the Waterloo Fire Station, and to design and construct a new fire station in North Columbia. I understand it is very important to improve our public safety cost and emergency response efficiency. However, I don't see that increasing the fire tax by 34% is the best or the only way to resolve the problem.

The 34% increase of fire tax causes current fire tax rate from \$0.176 to \$0.236 for each \$100 of assessed property value. In my opinion, the current fire tax rate of \$0.176 is already way too high compared to the \$0.1065 in Montgomery County and \$0.064 in Charles County. If there isn't a capital project for fire department every year for the following 5 to 10 years in the county, why fire tax should be increased by 34% from now and going on?

To contribute and to make our county a better place is the responsibility of every resident in the county. I support our county government. When the county makes decisions that impact each resident, like tax increasing, could the county government give us reasonable explanations? I wonder if the voice of opposition will ever be heard?

Hailan Zhou

Sent from my iPhone

Sayers, Margery

From: Yong Chen <flyeagle2001@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, May 27, 2019 10:57 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Fire tax increase should be temporary (1-3 years)

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear County Council Members,

My address is 10637 Whiterock Court. I heard that fire tax increase is proposed to build the two new fire stations. The painful thing living in Maryland is that proposed tax stays forever. Building two fire stations is a project. So once the project is done, the tax should go back to the current percentage. For example, if the tax increase is 34%, then it should be one year only. If fire tax increase is 17%, then it should be two years only. If fire tax increase is 11%, then it should be 3 years only. Please work with the county executive to have a plan that will impose minimal impact on residents.

Best Regards,
Yong Chen

Sayers, Margery

From: Peter Cheng <petercheng1@verizon.net>
Sent: Monday, May 27, 2019 8:48 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Fire and rescue tax increase

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

I object to the proposed fire tax increase and EMS transport fee to support building 2 new fire stations. While fire stations are very important, they can be funded by other options such as Capital Budget or by bonds as all government capital projects are normally funded. The county can build two fire stations in two years to stage out costs. Such a big & permanent increase in fire tax is totally not justifiable.

Sent from my iPhone
Peter Cheng.

Sayers, Margery

From: panyongmei@gmail.com
Sent: Monday, May 27, 2019 8:05 AM
Cc: CouncilMail; boe@hcpss.org
Subject: Fwd: Opposition to fire tax increase and hcpss funding shortage

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

>
> Dear County Council Members,
>
> I just got the news that there's a proposal that our county's fire tax be increased by 34% for renovation/construction of two fire stations. As a resident in District 1, I'm writing to express my opposition to the fire increase. I'm not sure if other counties have such tax. But Maryland is already one of the heavily taxed states in the country and Howard county residents are carry extreme high property taxes due to high home prices. Please vote against the fire tax increase!
>
> About shortage of hcpss funding, I would suggest to find ways to reduce cost instead of cutting programs, teachers or increasing tax. For example, it's very warm, or hot inside my daughter's school building in winter. I'm wondering how many degree it's set by the heating system in winter? How about decreasing the temperature by 1-2c to reduce cost?
>
> Thank you
>
> Howard county resident
> Yongmei Pan, PhD
>
> 5339 Sunny Field Ct
> Ellicott City, 21043
>
> Best Regards,
>
>
> Sent from my iPhone

Sayers, Margery

From: panyongmei@gmail.com
Sent: Monday, May 27, 2019 8:01 AM
To: CouncilMail
Cc: boe@hcpss.org
Subject: Opposition to fir tax increase and hcpss funding shortage

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear County Council Members,

I just got the news that there's a proposal that our county's fire tax be increased by 34% for renovation/construction of two fire stations. As a resident in District 1, I'm writing to express my opposition to the fire increase. I'm not sure if other counties have such tax. But Maryland is already one of the heavily taxed states in the country and Howard county residents are carry extreme high property taxes due to high home prices. Please vote against the fire tax increase!

About shortage of hcpss funding, I would suggest to find ways to reduce cost instead of cutting programs, teachers or increasing tax. For example, it's very warm, or hot inside my daughter's school building in winter. I'm wondering how many degree it's set by the heating system in winter? How about decreasing the temperature by 1-2c to reduce cost?

Thank you

Howard county resident
Yongmei Pan, PhD

5339 Sunny Field Ct
Ellicott City, 21043

Best Regards,

Sent from my iPhone

Sayers, Margery

From: Jiankang Jiang <jiankangj@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 26, 2019 10:54 PM
To: CouncilMail; Walsh, Elizabeth; Jones, Opel; Rigby, Christiana; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David
Subject: Oppose to fire tax increase

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear County Council Members,

As a resident in District #4, I'm writing to express my opposition to the fire increase. Maryland is already one of the most heavily taxed states in the country and Howard county residents are carry extreme high property taxes due to high home prices and the property tax rate. The property tax increased much faster than family income. Please vote against the fire tax increase!

Best Regards,
Jian-kang Jiang

Sayers, Margery

From: Jennifer Guo <jenniejguo@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 26, 2019 10:11 PM
To: CouncilMail; Jones, Opel; Rigby, Christiana; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David
Subject: Oppose to fire tax increase

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear County Council Members,

As a resident in Howard County, I'm writing to express my opposition to the fire increase. Maryland is already one of the heavily taxed states in the country and Howard county residents are carry extreme high property taxes due to high home prices. Please vote against the fire tax increase!

Best Regards,

Jennifer Guo

Sayers, Margery

From: Lin Zhou <lynnlz2002@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 26, 2019 9:32 PM
To: CouncilMail
Cc: Jung, Deb
Subject: Fire tax increase should be temporary (1-3 yrs)

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear County Council member,

My address is 5728 whistling winds walk, clarksville, md 21029 (District 4).

I heard that a fire tax increase has been proposed to build two new fire stations. The painful thing living in Maryland is that proposed tax stays forever. Building two fire station is a short-term project. So once the project is finished, the tax rate should go back to the current percentage. For example, if the tax increase is 34%, then it should be one year only. If fire tax increase is 17%, then it should be two years only. If fire tax increase is 11%, then it should be 3 years only. please work with the county executive to have a plan that will impose minimal impact on residents.

Best regards,

Lin Zhou

Sayers, Margery

From: Lin Zhou <lynnlz2002@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 26, 2019 9:27 PM
To: CouncilMail
Cc: Jung, Deb
Subject: Fire tax increase is too high

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear County Council Member,

I have been living in District #4 for 7 years and I voted for you last November. I understand that funds are needed to build the two new fire stations. And the proposed fire tax increase is a shocking 34% increase. It is beyond what we can bear. However, there are different ways to fund this project to reduce the increase, for example, partially funded by Capital Budget, issue bonds. Further, the two fire stations do not need to be built at the same time. We should build them one at a time, therefore, the fire tax increase don't have to increase at once. Please work with other council members on this matter on our behalf.

Best regards,

Lin Zhou

5728 whistling winds walk
Clarksville, MD 21029

Sayers, Margery

From: Lin Zhou <lynnlz2002@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 26, 2019 9:20 PM
To: CouncilMail
Cc: Jung, Deb
Subject: Oppose to fire tax increase

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear County Council members,

As a resident in District #4, I am writing to express my opposition to the fire tax increase. Maryland is already one of the heavily taxed states in the country and Howard county residents are carrying extreme high property taxes due to high home prices. Please vote against the fire tax increase!

Best Regards,

Lin Zhou

Sayers, Margery

From: yi han <hanyi1990@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 26, 2019 6:14 PM
To: CouncilMail
Cc: Rigby, Christiana; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David; Walsh, Elizabeth; Jones, Opel
Subject: Fire tax increase is too high

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear County Council Members,

I've been living District #5 for 3 years. I understand funds are needed to build the two new fire stations. And the proposed fire tax increase is a shocking 34% increase. It is beyond what we can bear. However, there are different ways to fund this project to reduce the increase, for example, partially funded by Capital Budget, issue bonds. Further, the two fire stations don't need to be built at the same time. We should build them one at a time, therefore, the fire tax increase don't have to increase at once. Please work with other councilmen/women on this matter on our behalf.

Best,

Sayers, Margery

From: Sarah Bi <zhou_sarah@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 26, 2019 4:11 PM
To: CouncilMail; Jung, Deb
Subject: Oppose to fire tax increase

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear County Council Members,

As a resident in Howard County District #4, I'm writing to express my opposition to the fire tax increase. Maryland is already one of the heavily taxed states in the country. Howard county residents are carrying extreme high property taxes due to high home prices. Please vote against the fire tax increase!

Best Regards,
Sarah Bi

Sayers, Margery

From: Sufang Li <lisufang@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 26, 2019 4:06 PM
To: CouncilMail; Walsh, Elizabeth; Jones, Opel; Rigby, Christiana; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David
Subject: Oppose to fire tax increase

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear County Council Members,

As a resident in District #5, I'm writing to express my opposition to the fire increase. Maryland is already one of the heavily taxed states in the country and Howard county residents are carry extreme high property taxes due to high home prices. If the tax increases and will cause heavy burden for our residents. We might be unable to live in this county for a long time. Please vote against the fire tax increase!

Best Regards,

Sufang Li

Sayers, Margery

From: Junye Chen <junye.chen@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 26, 2019 3:07 PM
To: CouncilMail; Walsh, Elizabeth; Jones, Opel; Rigby, Christiana; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David
Subject: Against fire tax increase

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Sir or Madam,

I strongly against fire tax increase in Howard county!!!

More resources should be added in elementary education!!!

Junye Chen

Sayers, Margery

From: Minzhuan Gong <minzhuan_gong@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 26, 2019 2:36 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Please vote no on the fire tax increase

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

May 21, 2019

HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL
RECEIVED

George Howard Building
1st Floor
3430 Courthouse Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043

2019 MAY 24 PM 1:51
AK JF MS

To: Howard County Council Members

Howard County Department of Fire & Rescue Services (HCDFRS) Chief Christine Ulhorn recently defended County Executive Ball's proposed 6 cent increase in the Howard County fire and rescue tax. Unfortunately, many of the arguments she presents are not the reality of call volume and type in Howard County. Instead, Chief Ulhorn is planning a virtual doubling of the Howard County DFRS budget in the next 6 years, adding 5 new fire stations to the existing 12, and requiring significant additional fire tax increases to fund a \$158m deficit.

HCDFRS does not run many fire calls; recently posted April statistics show 2200+ total responses, of which only 20 were fire-related. Twenty. March had 30. Fewer calls were actual fires; most are odor of smoke, burned food on the stove, or an overheated appliance. To be fair, HCDFRS fire apparatus also responds on auto accidents and natural gas leaks, but mostly they respond to medical calls with the medic units. We simply don't have much fire in Howard County.

What we do have are calls for Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and that volume is growing as Chief Ulhorn states. EMS calls are driven in part by population growth in general, and in particular by an aging population and the introduction of nursing homes and senior care facilities. Howard County's growth numbers are fueled by this type of growth, something that former Chief John Butler began responsibly addressing with additional medic units at existing stations. The vast majority of EMS call volume falls into the 7AM-7PM time period. So why build 5 more fire stations to handle <1 fire-related call per day on average when the problem can be better addressed by increasing supplemental EMS units during daytime hours? One idea might be to have roving medic units that back-fill areas of the county when other units are out on calls. This could be done with minimal staffing (day shifts), and limited capital investment in ambulance units rather than building expensive new fire stations and adding fire apparatus and crews that are not needed.

Chief Ulhorn's plans for the future of HCDFRS are just the tip of a very large financial iceberg that will wreak havoc on Howard County taxpayers if not questioned and held in check. The time to do that for this year's budget cycle has probably passed, and the current 6-7 cent increase may well be needed to cover current shortfalls. The key, though, is to ask the tough questions of HCDFRS *before* multi-year commits are made that will ratchet up the fire tax significantly to cover expenditures over the next several years that are both unnecessary and financially irresponsible.

I would be happy to meet with you individually or collectively to discuss further. Thank you.

Tim Titcomb

Tim Titcomb
1950 St. James Road
Marriottsville, MD 21104
(410) 489-5622