

**Sayers, Margery**

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**From:** Phil Kolocotronis <ktronis@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 27, 2020 10:25 AM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** CR85-2020 Proposed Recordation Tax Restructure

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

Dear Council:

I would like to lodge my opposition to the proposed restructuring of the County's Recordation Tax. Regardless of rhetoric, this will be an increase in the tax for the average homeowner. Furthermore, it is unlikely that developers will absorb the increased costs. They will simply pass it along to home buyers. This idea is especially bad considering the economic crisis many in our community now face. I urge you to reconsider this proposal.

Respectfully,

Philip Kolocotronis  
5327 Chase Lions Way  
Columbia MD 21044

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Jennifer Dwyer <jennifer@progressivemaryland.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 26, 2020 6:01 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Testimony on CR85-2020  
**Attachments:** CR85-2020 Progressive Maryland Testimony.docx

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

Hello,

Please find attached Progressive Maryland's testimony in support of CR85-2020.

Thank you,

Jennifer Dwyer

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Director of Development and Policy  
Progressive Maryland  
774-991-1617



33 University Boulevard East  
Silver Spring, MD 20901

[www.progressivemaryland.org](http://www.progressivemaryland.org)

 [contact@progressivemaryland.org](mailto:contact@progressivemaryland.org)

 [facebook.com/progressivemaryland](https://facebook.com/progressivemaryland)

 [@Progressive\\_MD](https://twitter.com/Progressive_MD)

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## CR85-2020

### Progressive Recordation Tax Legislation

TO: Councilmember Jung, Chair, and members of the Howard County Council  
FROM: Jennifer Dwyer, Director of Policy and Development  
DATE: May 26th, 2020  
POSITION: Support

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on CR85-2020. Progressive Maryland is a grassroots, nonprofit organization with 9 regional chapters from Western Maryland to the Lower Shore and more than 100,000 members and supporters who live in nearly every legislative district in the state. In addition, there are dozens of affiliated community, faith, and labor organizations across the state that stand behind our work. Our mission is to improve the lives of working families in Maryland. Please note our strong support for this bill.

This legislation replaces Howard County's regressive flat recordation tax with a new progressive tax structure, lowering the rate on property sales below \$300,000 and raising the rate on higher real estate transaction brackets.

Over 76% of the \$20 million in increased revenue from this progressive structure is generated from real estate transactions over \$1 million, many of which are large real estate transactions for commercial properties and residential development parcels. Meanwhile, the recordation tax rate would be lower for the roughly 20% of residential homes that sell for \$300,000 or less, making buying a first home a bit easier for families across Howard County. Only 3% of transactions in 2019 were above \$1 million.

The revenue generated from the recordation tax goes into the General Fund, supporting education, public safety, and healthcare among other essential services. This proposal offers the County Council with an opportunity to avoid the harsh impacts of austerity, which could include reductions in services and decreased investment in the community in a difficult year.

A progressive tax structure helps to ensure that individuals and corporations who are doing well in our county pay their fair share to support the public infrastructure their businesses rely on. We urge you to pass CR85-2020.

**Sayers, Margery**

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**From:** Daniel Griffis <daniel.griffis@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 26, 2020 4:59 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** support the recordation tax restructure

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

Hello Council Members!

I'm a new resident of the community. I support the recordation tax restructure and I urge you to strongly consider it vs cutting vital projects and services the community needs.

Thank you for your time.

-Dan Griffis

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** matt pendergast <matt.pendergast@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 26, 2020 1:39 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Cc:** Jung, Deb  
**Subject:** NO to CR84 and CR85

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

All,

Please vote **NO** to CR84 and CR85, and focus on cutting unnecessary spending during this worldwide pandemic. During this time of economic crisis, it is **unfair** to your constituents to raise recordation fees and transfer taxes to fund things which can clearly wait, an example of which is the Cultural Center in Downtown Columbia.

Thanks  
Matt Pendergast  
District 4 voter

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Jones, Diane  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 26, 2020 11:36 AM  
**To:** Sayers, Margery  
**Subject:** FW: Please do not support CR 84 and CR 85

-----Original Message-----

From: Abraham G <gol.abraham@gmail.com>  
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2020 6:58 PM  
To: Walsh, Elizabeth <ewalsh@howardcountymd.gov>; Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>; Jung, Deb <djung@howardcountymd.gov>; Yungmann, David <dyungmann@howardcountymd.gov>; Jones, Diane <dijones@howardcountymd.gov>; Glendenning, Craig <cglendenning@howardcountymd.gov>; Regner, Robin <rregner@howardcountymd.gov>  
Subject: Please do not support CR 84 and CR 85

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

As a Howard county resident, I am highly concerned about the proposed tax increases under CR 84 and CR 85.

My wife and 3 year old daughter moved to Howard county from California in 2017 and love it here. The people are warm and friendly, the nature is beautiful, the schools are second to none, the parks are great, it is safe, to name a few of the reasons. My wife is pregnant with a son who is due in a few days. As our family grows we will likely need to find a larger home, and we would love if it were in Howard county.

When I looked at the details of the CR 84 and CR 85 tax increases, I realized this would add a large tax burden on us when we sell our current house and then again when we purchase our new house. I understand that taxes are important for the county to run effectively, but I am concerned this tax increase encourages people to rent or to leave Howard county, and not set up roots and become long-term members of our community.

Please do not support this tax increase.

Sincerely,

Mohammad Abraham Kazemizadeh Gol

Narges Golgol

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Eric Goldberg <egoldberg@oxfordra.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 26, 2020 10:32 AM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Proposed Transfer and Recordation Tax Increase

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

Council members, I am writing to request that the county council not enact the narrow and disproportionate recordation and transfer tax increases currently being considered. I believe these increases will make the county uncompetitive, delay recovery and are not the solution to Howard County's fiscal problems.

I am a property owner of commercial real estate in many counties in Maryland including Howard County and I believe that these increases are significant enough that if enacted, would significantly impact my investment decisions and cause me to most likely decide to invest in other areas. And I fear my holdings in Howard County would immediately be negatively affected.

I would urge you and your colleagues to fully implement the recommendations of the Spending Affordability Advisory Committee including creating a stakeholder process to, "*work jointly with all stakeholders to develop a long-term fiscal approach that addresses the priority needs of the community and is fiscally sustainable,*" and completing a fiscal impact analysis of tax changes and other legislation with the potential for sizable impact revenues and expenditures.

I understand that the County revenues have been significantly impacted from the COVID-19 crisis, but I truly believe trying to improve the budget issues on the backs of real estate owners is not the right solution. Our tenants are experiencing significant pain and consequently, we are as well. This tax increase would only serve to further exacerbate our fiscal woes.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Regards,

Eric Goldberg

301-983-8000 x 24

301-983-0444 (fax)

240-426-1144 (mobile)



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## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Anna Kristine Ferre <akferre@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 25, 2020 8:50 PM  
**To:** Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Legislation on Recordation and Transfer Tax Increase - Testimony

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

Councilmembers and County Executive Ball,

I am writing to you to express my opposition for legislation to increase recordation and transfer taxes for home purchase/sales. Earlier this year, our family made the tough decision to proceed with the sale of our home in hopes that we can move to a neighborhood where we will not have to worry about our polygon being rezoned ever year.

After weeks of searching, crunching numbers, making room in our budget, and heavily weighing our options, we decided to build with NV homes in Maple Lawn South, which will not be build until later this summer/early fall.

Although some may have the notion that people who buy in Maple Lawn or Maple Lawn South are well off and do not need to worry much about tax increases, I want to emphasize that my family and I fall squarely in the middle class and work very hard to ensure that our two kids will have a solid education in a safe neighborhood. We scrounged every penny and likely dipping into our retirement savings so we can be in a home where our kids can walk to school from elementary school through high school and won't need to worry about being rezoned.

The increase in recordation and transfer taxes will not just affect us...it will cripple us. In a new build, it falls solely on the buyer to pay recordation and transfer taxes. The tax increase will be on us to shoulder alone. If we couldn't come up with the extra funds to cover closing costs due to the tax increase, we won't have a home to go back to as ours has already sold. We chose the least expensive house in that neighborhood and even with the lower cost compared to the others, we would be looking at a tax increase from \$9000 to almost \$20,000 (and that's not including state transfer taxes).

I understand that you all have a very tough job to do...balancing the county's budget and deciding where the money will come from. Trust me, I know this is hard. But I hope the answer you come up with is to NOT take more money from hard working county residents like me. Please consider halting unnecessary spending where you can, at least until the Coronavirus impact to businesses and residents as a whole has been well understood. Like most of us, now is the time to cut unnecessary spending.

My husband and I are counting our blessings. We both still have our jobs and our children are safe and healthy. But we are anxious everyday. We worry that our jobs will ultimately be impacted. We worry that my husband will get sick when he goes outside to get our groceries. We worry that we have chosen the worst possible time to move...why couldn't we anticipate a global pandemic? Why couldn't we anticipate this tax increase proposal? Why didn't we know when we first moved to Howard county that we would end up worrying every year about school rezoning?

If we had a crystal ball, we would have made so many different choices...and we can't be the only ones who have these thoughts weighing heavily in our minds.

Please, I urge you all again to reconsider this tax increase. Step away for a minute from your budget spreadsheet and consider the real-life impact to families looking to buy homes in the county.

Thank you

Anna Shin, Howard County Resident

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Brian Reed <reedb@umbc.edu>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 25, 2020 4:01 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** No on increased recording tax

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

LIVE WITHIN YOUR MEANS!!!!

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** sheridan phillips <sheridanphillips@msn.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 25, 2020 8:43 AM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** New recordation tax

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

In our current economic crisis, increasing a tax which will further deter people from moving into Howard County - I say further because of the redistricting fiasco - is not a good idea especially when this mostly discourages wealthier people who will bring in more money and pay more property tax.

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Timothy McCormack <tfmccormack@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 25, 2020 7:01 AM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Re: CB 84 and CB 85

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

I write to urge you to vote NO on CB 84 and CB 85. Now is not the time to raise these regressive taxes!

Timothy F. McCormack  
7806 Old Litchfield Lane  
Ellicott City, MD 21043

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** condonmag <condonmag@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 24, 2020 6:47 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** VOTE NO ON JONES AND RIGBY

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

An abomination to raise transfer and recording tax on individual tax payer while declining to raise developer fees.

Earlier this month, Councilmembers Opel Jones and Christiana Mercer-Rigby introduced legislation to raise recordation fees. The county executive also introduced legislation to raise transfer taxes.

Meanwhile, the county administration chose not to raise nearly 250 DPZ, DPW and DILP fees, among others, for the 20th year in a row, because it would impact the development community during the economic crisis. Not to mention the Moderate Income Housing Fee-in-Lieu, which is not market based increased by a mere **0.02 cents**. So the economic crisis warrants deferring fee increases on the development community, while the taxpayer is fair game. This is unfair and against accountability.

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Shenaz Oomrigar-Sabnis <shenazos@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 24, 2020 10:17 AM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** NO to CR84 & CR85

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

County Council members,

Happy Memorial Day weekend! It is sacrifices that our fellow country men make have made this holiday possible and I want to remind you that YOU ALL work for us people NOT the developers! Time to make sacrifices not sacrifice us at the behest of greedy developers.

You, the county administration have chosen not to raise nearly 250 DPZ, DPW and DILP fees, among others, for the 20th year in a row, because it would impact the development community during the economic crisis. You are not listening to voices of the people who elected you and DO NOT WANT any increase in their taxes.

It is absolutely SHAMEFUL that a time when we should be reigning in budgets and taxes, Council person Rigby & Jones and CE Ball are choosing to add to the burden of the very people they should be helping. At a time when we are all tightening our budgets, proposing increases of taxes of any kind is being tone deaf and completely ignoring how much people will be hurting because of the lockdown and it's consequences! Why not halt building the \$\$\$\$66 million Cultural Center temporarily instead of adding to the burden of people who are already cutting down on their needs rather than wants (the cultural center is a want NOT a need) and learn a thing about budgeting when in crisis!!

**NO MORE TAXES OR INCREASES!!! VOTE NO TO CR84 & 85 or prepare to be VOTED OUT!**

I normally do not use CAPS for anything but I feel like you are not listening to us and hence the loud CAPS.

I hope you remember the sacrifices that were made as you celebrate Memorial Day this weekend and do the right thing - VOTE NO to increasing transfer taxes and recordation fees.

Regards,

Shenaz Sabnis

Sent from my iPhone



## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Kim Birnbaum <ksmiles@myfastmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, May 23, 2020 12:13 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Recordation tax restructure  
**Attachments:** County Executive and County Council testimony re. Recordation Tax - Google Docs.pdf

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

Attached is my testimony in support of the recordation tax restructure.

J. K. Birnbaum  
Elkridge, MD

May 23, 2020

Dear County Council Members,

I am writing to encourage you to support the recordation tax restructure.

We need additional funding more than ever, and this is a way to do that with minimal adverse impact on the community and those that can least afford it. Those that would be affected by this increase are people who are choosing to pay for a high end home, and would be minimally impacted by this tax change. Whereas, not having it has an enormous adverse impact on the middle class and lower income residents of Howard County and the cuts would be disastrous including reductions of badly needed new affordable housing, cuts to our already stressed school system\*, delays to school buildings that are long overdue, and will likely result in having to replace the buildings entirely at a greater cost. There are other jurisdictions that tax higher and charge higher fees including to developers. To maintain the high quality of services our County prides itself on--including our school system--we need more money. This is a way to do that with minimal adverse impact on our citizens. A 2% tax on real estate transactions over \$1 million, is an effective way to make sure that land developers and corporations pay their fair share to support our community infrastructure and services including our school system. To them, this is a small increase easily offset by ensuring that the houses they build are in demand. As, their success is intrinsically linked to the success of the County and its attractiveness to home buyers as a desirable place to live. Additionally, the restructure will lower the recordation tax on lower cost homes, which will help first time home buyers, those with home equity loans, and the working class. The loudest voices objecting to this "burden" are the ones who can most afford it. Developers need to pay their fair share.

Development, and our inaccurate way of estimating student enrollment, has resulted in continuous crowding issues, frequent redistricting, and funding that continuously lags actual enrollment. The opportunity, achievement, and discipline gaps are alarmingly wide and special education is in crisis. We desperately need a new high school, and several of our school buildings are in severe disrepair. We cannot hope to make gains in these areas if we do not keep pace with enrollment increase--much less infuse money to make significant improvements. The current school budget **is less than we spent for FY 2020. This budget is likely not in compliance with our legal obligations.**

I understand the the County was hard hit with additional expenses, but cuts, which will be necessary without additional sources of income, including cuts to special education will have a domino effect. Cutting programs, cutting staff, training, or replacing experienced staff with cheaper workers often results in more service costs because of poorer results, more lawsuits, more nonpublic placements, more staff turnover, etc. As hard as it is to swallow, we need to invest in our schools, including special education, as those investments will pay off and result in stabilizing and ultimately lowering costs later. Similarly, further delays to renovations will result in further degradation and increased repair or replacement costs later. Conversely, by "saving" money now we are costing ourselves more money later, and often with poorer student outcomes as a result.

I implore you to make support this recordation tax restructure to better fund our County.

Respectfully,

J. Kim Birnbaum  
Elkridge, MD

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** no-reply@howardcountymd.gov  
**Sent:** Friday, May 22, 2020 3:21 PM  
**To:** woldsarah4@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Council - CR 84 and CR 85 Concerns

**First Name:** Sarah  
**Last Name:** Wold  
**Email:** [woldsarah4@gmail.com](mailto:woldsarah4@gmail.com)  
**Street Address:** 7133 Stone Throw Way  
**City:** Elkridge  
**Subject:** CR 84 and CR 85 Concerns

**Message:** Dear County Council Members and Staff, I am writing to express concerns that, if passed, CR 84 and CR 85 would result in increased local transfer & recordation tax rates on real estate transactions. Please consider the wishes of your constituents and our financial welfare. While Howard County is a county of affluence public servants and teachers like me struggle to afford housing and the high tax rate associated with calling Howard County "home." Please consider us when you make your decisions on CR 84 and CR 85. Respectfully, Sarah Wold

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Robin Hessey <rmhessey@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 22, 2020 10:54 AM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** In favor of passing CB-84 and CB 85 to raise fees.

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

Honorable Councilmembers,

I am fully in favor of raising the recordation fee and transfer tax, especially since the increases are progressive. I understand these taxes are only levied when you buy or sell a home, so if you don't do that you don't pay it.

I am in support of passing CB-84 and CB-85 to raise these fee/tax rates.

Also, if the NCC project is not funded for FY 21, the Housing Commission's already secured funding package is at significant risk. The consequence of failure to approve capital funding for the NCC is that the \$26.5 million in Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) and other State funding—40 percent of the necessary financing—is likely to be withdrawn by the State. Loss of this funding would negate being able to develop this LIHTC project. Failure to proceed or complete a project can result in a loss of points to the developer in future rounds. This would make it extremely difficult for the Commission or Orchard Development to win future LIHTC funding.

Robin Hessey  
10768 McGregor Drive  
Columbia MD 21044

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Lisa Schlossnagle <lisabmrss@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 21, 2020 1:36 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** support CB84 and CB85

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

Dear Council,

In previous emails to you, I've shared my support for raising the recordation fee. I also support raising the transfer tax. After seeing the alternatives proposed by Ms. Jung, Ms. Walsh, and Mr. Yungmann, I am even more in support of raising these progressively structured consumption taxes.

Your passage of these bills is the fiscally responsible thing to do. Government austerity in a financial downturn does not accelerate economic recovery, but it does prolong the stress and challenges for most people.

I urge you to pass CB84 and CB85.

All the best,  
Lisa Schlossnagle  
Fulton, MD (D4)