



The Greater Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce

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**Testimony of Ron Resh
On Behalf of
The Greater Bethesda-Chevy Chase
Chamber of Commerce
Regarding Bill 906-09
Before the
Montgomery County Delegation
December 11, 2008**

THE GREATER BETHESDA-CHEVY CHASE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO BILL MC 906-09
BEFORE THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY DELEGATION
December 11, 2008

Good evening. I am Ron Resh, representing The Greater Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce. On behalf of our large, diverse membership of more than 800 business entities, we respectfully oppose Bill MC 906-09. This measure would authorize Montgomery County to impose, without any rational basis, a discriminatory level of taxation on business-owned real property.

For decades Maryland has operated under a fair and equitable system of real property taxation. State law requires counties to impose one rate of taxation on all property, residential and business alike. In the long run, because of higher assessed valuation for business property as well as homestead tax credits enjoyed only by residential property, businesses have shouldered a significant portion of the of overall real property tax revenue burden.

By authorizing one county to establish its own system of real property tax classes, Bill MC 906-09 would undermine the coherent statewide system now in effect. It would introduce unnecessary complexity and uncertainty in the tax administration process. It would make no provision for small businesses struggling for survival. It would increase the cost of doing business, which of necessity would be passed on to those who can bear it least. MC 906-09 simply represents a new tax on businesses and consumers.

There is no need to recount the devastating effect of the current economic downturn on all elements of society. Businesses are particularly hard hit. Montgomery County businesses are no exception. Business owners are still reeling from the impact of the major tax increases imposed by the General Assembly last year. If anything, our elected officials should promote a tax system that encourages job growth and business retention and attraction to our state and our county. Bill MC 906-09 would do just the opposite.

For these reasons, The Greater Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce urges an unfavorable report on this bill.