

## Testimony in Support of HB 256

*Maryland Estate Tax – Unified Credit*

House Ways and Means Committee

February 12, 2020, 1:00 PM

Submitted by Terrence Cavanagh, Executive Director

SERVICE EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION MARYLAND & DC STATE COUNCIL

On behalf of Service Employees International Union, Maryland and DC State Council, I am pleased to offer our organization's **support** for **HB 256**, which will raise revenue for those with the greatest needs from those who can most easily give it up.

With over two million members, the Service Employees International Union is the largest union in North America. We are focused on uniting workers in the key service sectors to improve our lives and the services we provide. In Maryland and DC, the seven SEIU locals that make up our State Council represent over 45,000 Health Care, Property Service, and Public Service Workers.

There are many reasons to pass HB 256. Here are a few:

- By 2022 it would raise \$116.50 Million. We need that money to provide every Maryland child a real opportunity for a world-class education.
- Not taxing the first \$ 1 Million of Estates allows the vast majority of Maryland's estates to remain exempt, so this only effects a relatively low percentage of estates.
- The argument the people leave in order to avoid paying this tax is not supported by the facts. Do older, wealthier people leave Maryland? Yes. Is it in any large measure due to our taxes? No

SEIU urges a **favorable** report of **HB 256**.  
Thank you.