



MARYLAND BUDGET & TAX POLICY INSTITUTE

**POSITION STATEMENT
SUPPORTING
SENATE BILL 998 – STATE BUDGET**

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

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The Maryland Budget and Tax Policy Institute supports Senate Bill 998.

The bill proposes a constitutional amendment that would allow the legislature to increase items to the budget proposed by the Governor, or add items to those proposed by the Governor. The proposed amendment would provide several safeguards against excessive additions by the legislature:

- The legislature could not increase the total budget above the amount proposed by the Governor.
- Items added or increase by the legislature would be subject to veto by the Governor.

Maryland's executive budget system is unique among the 50 states. No state legislature is prevented from acting on issues of statewide priority by adding to the budget. As a result, our legislature resorts to legal mandates and cumbersome restrictions and transfers to address unmet needs.

Under the system proposed in SB 998, Maryland's governor's budget powers would remain the strongest in the nation. However, it would provide a more straightforward way for the legislative branch to alter the budget to address critical needs.

For these reasons, the Maryland Budget and Tax Policy Institute requests the Senate Budget and taxation Committee to make a favorable report on SB 998.