

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

***People Experiencing Homeless, Advocates to Hold  
Maryland Human Rights Budget Hearing***

BALTIMORE – On Thursday, December 3 from 1:00PM to 3:00PM at the Enoch Pratt Central Library (400 Cathedral Street) people experiencing homelessness and their advocates will hold a “Maryland Human Rights Budget Hearing” to examine the impact of budget cuts upon the social safety net. The event, which is open to the public, will include a briefing on Maryland’s fiscal situation from the Maryland Budget and Tax Policy Institute and testimony from individuals directly affected by budget cuts. Following the hearing, a proposed constitutional amendment requiring a “Human Rights Budget” will be delivered to the O’Malley Administration.

“We have a \$13 billion state budget, and 50% of it goes to education and health care,” said Peter Sabonis, Assistant Director of Advocacy at Legal Aid. “If \$2 billion is going to be cut from the budget during the next legislative session, human rights principles, not lobbyists, should determine what remains”

“Maryland needs a balanced approach to balancing the budget. Right now, people need help more than ever. We need to strengthen the safety net, not weaken it,” said Neil Bergsman, Director of the Maryland Budget and Tax Policy Institute.”

“I’ve worked all my life, but recently had some serious injuries. I rely on safety net programs like TDAP to meet my basic needs – like housing,” said Paulette Palmer, who testified at a recent hearing in opposition to proposed reductions to the state’s Temporary Disability Assistance Program. “My very survival depends on the survival of a strong safety net.”

The hearing, which is organized by *Save TDAP* advocates, comes only weeks before the commemoration of National Homeless Persons’ Memorial Day, which has been observed for nearly two decades on or about December 21 – the first day of winter and the longest night of the year. A public memorial service will take place on Monday, December 21 (5:00PM at Baltimore’s Inner Harbor Amphitheater – between the pavilions near Pratt and Calvert Streets). National Homeless Persons’ Memorial Day events are organized locally by SHARP, a coalition of individuals and organizations working to “Stop Homelessness And Reduce Poverty.”

For additional information, please contact Adam Schneider at 410/837-5533 x1398 or [aschneider@hchmd.org](mailto:aschneider@hchmd.org).

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