MacRo Report
Blog

State needs to make tough decisions like Frederick County did

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The General Assembly is currently debating a proposal from Gov. Martin O'Malley to shift hundreds of millions in pension costs from the state to the county governments. Counties disagree that this shift will do anything to improve the sustainability of state pension funding.

County governments don't run the pension system, don't negotiate teacher salaries, and did not create these costs -- but the governor's budget sends this ticking time bomb to the county governments -- which would simply have to pay the freight without any say in the system or its costs. This is not right or fair to county taxpayers!

In Frederick County alone, the new county cost for the coming year is $10,281,577. The fiscal staff in Annapolis says that would grow immediately to $13,243,393 the next year and all the way to $15,392,080 over the next three years. That kind of burden would put massive pressure on county taxpayers and the basic public services our citizens depend on.

The state should resist the easy temptation to balance its budget on the backs of the counties. We urge our state senators and delegates to stand in opposition to these massive cost shifts and we urge our county residents to contact them with this message. Frederick County has proven it can live within its means and make tough decisions. The State of Maryland needs to learn to do the same.

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