

Homeowners bear city's tax burden

Letter to Editor, Baltimore Sun, August 8, 2008

In his column "Low-tax ranking bit of a stretch" (Aug. 1), Jay Hancock asked "real Baltimore business people" about the KPMG study that found that Baltimore businesses enjoy the second-lowest tax burden of any large city in the United States and, not surprisingly, found little support for that view in the business community.

However, the KPMG study bears serious consideration and debate. At a minimum, *The Sun* should have prominently reported the study instead of limiting its coverage to a rebuttal column in the business section.

Naturally, the business community wouldn't want this study to get much local attention.

Imagine the consequences of an informed public drawing the inevitable conclusion that our homeowners are carrying the enormous burden of subsidizing the lowest business tax rate in the continental United States.

While our businesses enjoy low taxes, our homeowners are subjected to the highest property tax in the region with dire consequences for the city.

The mayor and her Blue Ribbon Committee on Taxes and Fees failed to address this major tax disparity.

But starting Sept. 4, Baltimore will have a more representative review of the matter with the launch of the City Council's Special Committee on Property Tax Relief chaired by Councilman William H. Cole IV.

He'll need to hear residents' voices clearly and loudly because the business community is highly invested in the status quo and obviously knows how to get its way.

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