

7. *Preserve the State's Fiscal Strength*

As Maryland's Comptroller, Peter Franchot is a proven and decisive fiscal steward of Maryland's resources, helping to protect the state's AAA bond rating and ensure that Maryland is seen as a smart investment. A Franchot administration will make preserving the state's fiscal strength a top priority.

Franchot's administration will maintain Maryland's AAA Bond Rating by ensuring that spending decisions are made with careful consideration of available resources. Further, the success of government programs will no longer be defined by the amount of money spent on those programs, but instead their outcomes. In addition, achieving savings in existing programs and implementing outcome-based compensation models for future state contracts will be a priority.

Under a Franchot administration, the strategic and disciplined investment in necessary projects like those associated with world-class mass transportation infrastructure will be paid for via (i) contributions from the federal government, (ii) savings achieved through the better management of existing state programs, (iii) appropriately-designed public-private partnerships, (iv) the prudent issuance of debt, and (v) the resulting economic activity from these investments.

The Franchot administration will also offer innovative solutions to reduce government burden on Marylanders. Though politicians often talk about the importance of caring for taxpayer money, they rarely discuss the stress and cost associated with filing taxes. The Franchot administration will alleviate this stress by introducing and championing legislation that requires the state to provide a proposed tax bill to taxpayers who have simple tax obligations, so as to eliminate the cost, time, and anxiety associated with filing personal income taxes. Further, this will reduce the instances of predatory tax preparers who commit fraud using the personal information of others.

Franchot will also bring his award-winning focus on rooting out predatory fraud to the governor's office by creating a Center for Fraud Detection with purview that includes fraudulent Medicaid billings and other instances of fraud that drains the state's resources and inflates costs for Marylanders. This center will generate hundreds of millions of dollars in savings for the state that can be better invested in the average Marylander.

Finally, the Franchot administration will divest Maryland's Pension Fund from fossil fuels, a practice that has been shown to be both morally and financially beneficial to those who do so.

