

## **Marylanders deserve transparent government –Eli M. Gold**

When leaving office Gov. Robert Ehrlich was hailed for turning a \$1 billion deficit into a \$1 billion surplus. So how can it be that the next morning when Gov. Martin O'Malley sat behind the governor's desk for the first time, we had a \$1.5 billion dollar "structural" deficit?

The key word here is structural. Unlike a deficit, where you will have a negative balance in your bank account; a structural deficit is where you have a positive number in your account bank, but if you keep spending like you are, you will bounce your checks.

When your child asks for a raise in allowance, do you give with no questions asked? Will an employer give a blank check to an employee?

Well, our legislators are our employees, and many have the spending habits of our children. It's about time we started asking our legislators where they are spending our money before they spend it.

Do we need to afford illegal immigrants in state college tuition, something that so many people are against, when we can't afford to pay the bills we currently have, and when many legal immigrants can't afford tuition?

Do we need to throw more money at failing public schools? Would you fix a car that breaks down year after year?

If these are the expenditures that we know about prior to their legislative approval, imagine the bills that we don't know about.

It is for this reason that we should urge our legislators to pass a Maryland Funding Accountability and Transparency Act.

It would require all expenditures above \$10,000 be put on-line before they are passed, in order for the Maryland taxpayer to be able to easily learn about and more knowledgeably participate in the state and local dialogue on the expenditure of their money and the administration of their government.

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