

tant single thing that's happened for the State, and that the results have been advantageous. When you look around and see that the tax burdens of the localities have increased an average of 19 percent over last year without any need to increase property taxes except in a few isolated instances where the burden increase was over 19 percent, I think what we've done is obvious. Baltimore City got \$18 million in increased revenue from this tax program, including that which they raised with their own levy, which replaced the earnings tax.

Q. After you've achieved excellence in this area, in what area do you intend to strive toward excellence within the next Legislature? In other words, what programs are you going to present to the next Legislature?

A. This very morning I met for over 2½ hours with my staff to see how our legislative program for the coming session of the General Assembly was progressing. We will present a very important package, including several highly important and comprehensive programs in the areas of transportation and pollution, along with other more volatile and interesting legislation that I don't care to get into right now, but which will be developed as the session becomes more imminent.

Q. Is rapid transit on the agenda?

A. Yes.

Q. Would you give us a few of the details on it?

A. No.

Q. Governor, in line with your legislative program, a couple of weeks ago you came out here and gave us a statement in which you said you would ask the General Assembly to abolish the death penalty, except in certain specified instances. On television a couple of nights ago, and I won't mention the station, you said you were considering doing this. How come you softened your position on that?

A. I don't know whether it's been softened or hardened. I guess it's how you look at it. But I think we are going to make a proposal. It may be modified in some instances over the program that I released fairly definitely several months ago. We are seeking the abolition of capital punishment. We want to make sure it's attended by safeguards to protect the public. We also want to be sure it's compatible with not placing the administrators of the penal system, of the correctional system, in a position where they have custodial problems. That is one of the reasons why I decided to modify that statement, which if you remember called for life imprisonment without possibility of parole in some instances. After talking with Mr. McCabe and Mr. Cannon