



# 1970s

As America witnessed political changes and rising costs during the 1970s, the State Comptroller's Office continued its quest for high-tech efficiency.

At the start of the decade, the agency processed 1.5 million income tax returns, and a newly implemented automated sales tax

large corporations with Maryland tax obligations.

Two years later, a tape match program the comptroller conducts annually with the IRS netted \$1 million in new revenue.

The Maryland legislature increased the state sales tax rate to 5% in 1977, generating a total of

\$628 million during fiscal year 1978.

Also that year, income tax revenues topped the \$1 billion mark.

To handle the increased paperwork more efficiently, the comptroller installed automatic check encoding equipment to streamline depositing of income tax

revenue and to earn additional interest income for the state.



The State Comptroller's Office was actively seeking pioneering technology as far back as the 1970s to boost efficiency, evidenced by step-saving remittance processing equipment studied by Jim Loftus (left) and Eleanor Lent of the Retail Sales Tax Division.

Photo by Michael Walsh

system reaped nearly \$360 million in revenue.

In 1975, the Comptroller's Office moved ahead in computerization by introducing an optical character reader to streamline the processing of income tax withholding documents.

The year also marked the opening in New York of the agency's first out-of-state field office, where auditors could track



The first high-rise condominium in Ocean City opened in 1971.

In 1978, working parents in Maryland began enjoying a new state income tax break for child care costs.