

Taylor Proposes Cut in State Sales Tax On Opening Day of 1997 Assembly

House Speaker Casper R. Taylor Jr. wasted no time carrying the state's ongoing tax debate a step further Wednesday, suggesting Maryland's 5 percent sales tax could be reduced if the General Assembly broadened the tax base on emerging industries.

Taylor, D-Allegany, tucked his suggestion neatly into the traditional opening day festivities in Annapolis as this year's legislative session got underway.

In his speech to House delegates, Taylor promised to continue downsizing state government and reduce Maryland's high income tax burden.

His suggestion that the sales tax could be lowered caught several legislators by surprise, but Taylor seemed convinced the state could do it.

"That would be a real headline, reducing the income and sales taxes the same year," Taylor said. "I think we've got a good shot at it."

Taylor has long advocated modernizing Maryland's tax structure and, as an aid to state businesses, will introduce legislation proposing a 10 percent reduction in the state's personal income tax as part of that effort "in about 10 days," he said.

The Speaker is waiting for the House Ways and Means Committee to draw up legislation proposing a complete overhaul of Maryland's tax code.



**TAYLOR: OPENING THE TAX
DEBATE**