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Health and Government
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House Chair
Joint Committee on Cybersecurity,
Information Technology and
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony in Support of HB 572: Election Law - Postelection Tabulation Audits -
Risk-Limiting Audits
February 21, 2023**

Madam Chair Atterbeary and distinguished members of the Ways & Means Committee, it is my pleasure to come before you and offer testimony in favor of **House Bill 572**, to require risk-limiting audits (RLAs) for our elections. This legislation is about election integrity. Nothing matters more to our democracy than free and fair elections AND citizens' belief that our elections are free and fair.

RLAs are the *gold standard* for ballot auditing because it uses statistical means to confirm election results and takes full advantage of paper ballots. RLAs are recommended by election experts as the preferred way to verify election outcomes and to confirm that results have not been corrupted by hacking. RLAs manually examine randomly chosen individual paper ballots or batches of paper ballots until there is sufficiently strong evidence that a full hand count would confirm the electronic tabulation, or until there has been a full hand count.

RLAs are far superior to our current auditing procedures. Only an RLA can correct a wrong election outcome and ensure that the proper winners are certified. In contract, our current automated software audit cannot correct a wrong election outcome because it relies on recounting potentially inaccurate ballot images rather than actual physical ballots. Also, our current manual audit is not completed until months after the election results are certified. Furthermore, our current audit is only used to gauge the performance of the voting system and not to correct any problems with our election results.

I'd like to share what the National Academy of Sciences has to say about the need for RLAs. They say: "the design and development of current computer systems, no matter how well constructed, cannot anticipate and prevent all the possible means of attack". They further say, "There is no realistic mechanism to fully secure vote casting and tabulation computer systems from cyber threats." Therefore, manual auditing is necessary.

I urge a favorable report on **House Bill 572**. Thank you.