



TESTIMONY FOR HB0040
ELECTION LAW – POSTELECTION TABULATION AUDITS – RISK-LIMITING AUDITS

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Kaiser

Committee: Ways and Means

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0040 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Maintaining the integrity of the vote is one of the most important tasks of the Board of Elections in Maryland. Current election law requires a full audit of the election results after the primary and general elections. This is an important step in ensuring confidence in the vote. However, we have seen with the 2020 election, that the longer it takes to audit the results, the more concerned the general public gets with voter fraud.

This bill would require the Board of Elections, in conjunction with local Boards, to immediately conduct a risk-limiting audit of the vote. The audit would involve reviewing a percentage of the ballots cast in at least one statewide contest, and at least one countywide or local contest. The percentage (risk limit) would be a small pre-determined amount of total ballots received. The audit would require manually examining randomly chosen voter-verifiable paper records or batches of paper records until there is sufficiently strong statistical evidence that a full manual count would confirm the electronic count, or until there has been a full manual count.

This method would quickly provide the clarity about the election results required and would help the public have more confidence in the validity of the electoral process.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.