



January 23, 2026

**RE: Support for S.B. 255 / H.B. 350 and H.B. 219 – Maryland Voting Rights Act**

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Nykidra “Nyki” Robinson, and I submit this written testimony on behalf of Black Girls Vote, a nonpartisan civic engagement organization, in strong support of S.B. 255 / H.B. 350 and H.B. 219, the Maryland Voting Rights Act. Black Girls Vote is dedicated to educating, empowering, and mobilizing Black women and girls to participate fully in our democracy and advocate for policies that strengthen their communities. We currently operate three collegiate chapters in Maryland, engaging young leaders across the state in nonpartisan voter education and civic participation.

The Maryland Voting Rights Act represents a critical step forward in protecting the fundamental right to vote and ensuring that all Marylanders—particularly those from historically marginalized communities—have fair and equitable access to the ballot. While federal protections remain important, recent legal and policy shifts have made it clear that state-level safeguards are essential to preventing voter suppression, addressing racial vote dilution, and ensuring transparency in local election systems.

For the communities we serve, voting access is directly tied to opportunity. When communities are fully represented, they are better positioned to advocate for quality education, safe neighborhoods, economic investment, and accessible health and mental health services. The Maryland Voting Rights Act strengthens these outcomes by providing tools to identify and address discriminatory practices before they undermine fair representation.

This legislation is also vital to our work engaging young voters. At Black Girls Vote, we focus on building civic knowledge and confidence among young people—many of whom are first-time voters or come from communities where trust in the political process has been eroded. Strong, clear voting protections help reinforce the message that participation matters and that the system is designed to be accessible, fair, and responsive to their voices.

By strengthening protections against racial vote dilution, increasing transparency in local election practices, and ensuring equitable access to the ballot, the Maryland Voting Rights Act supports our efforts to engage young voters in meaningful and lasting ways. It allows organizations like ours to focus not only on turnout, but on long-term civic participation, leadership development, and community trust.

Maryland has long been recognized as a leader in equity and inclusion. Passage of S.B. 255 / H.B. 350 and H.B. 219 would reinforce that leadership and demonstrate a clear commitment to protecting democracy for current and future generations.



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For these reasons, Black Girls Vote respectfully urges a favorable report on these bills. We appreciate the General Assembly's continued commitment to protecting voting rights and ensuring that every Marylander has an equal opportunity to participate in our democratic process.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nyki Robinson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "N" and "R".

Nykidra "Nyki" Robinson  
Founder, Black Girls Vote  
Baltimore, Maryland