

**January 27, 2026**

**SB 255 Voting Rights Act of 2026 - Counties and Municipal Corporations**

**Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee**

**Position: Favorable with Amendments**

Esteemed members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

I write today in support of the Voting Rights Act of 2026 - Counties and Municipal Corporations.

As written this legislation would bolster voter's rights that have been enshrined on a federal level and now are under assault, it is critical that the state move swiftly to ensure that voting rights are fully protected across the state at the county and local municipal level. I am a proud voter at every primary and general election. It's important to me that all voices are heard in our democracy and that voter dilution is addressed.

The area of my concern lies in the common practice across several counties in the Southern Maryland region. In St Mary's County, where I raise my family and own a business, the elected offices of the county commissioners and school board are all voted at-large even though there are four districts in which the candidates must live. While it is logical that the President of the County Commissioner may be elected at-large, the practice of at-large voting for district seats is a problem. It is difficult for voters to assess, difficult for the candidates to canvas, and ultimately lead to homogenous majority votes. Ending the practice of at-large voting for districted offices would be an important step towards ending common practices that leave protected classes underrepresented.

**Therefore, my encouragement to the committee is to amend to improve upon the solid foundation of the Voting Rights Act of 2026 and ensure that Counties and Municipalities across Maryland are able to vote by district.**

Please do not hesitate to reach out with questions. Thank you for all you do.

Sincerely,

*Rosa E. P. Hance*

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