

HB0263\_RichardKaplowitz\_FAV

02/04/2026

Richard Keith Kaplowitz

Frederick, MD 21703

**TESTIMONY ON HB#/0263- POSITION: FAVORABLE**

**Election Law - Early Voting Centers - Bus Stops**

**TO:** Chair Wells, Vice Chair Kerr, and members of the Government, Labor, and Elections Committee

**FROM:** Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#/0263, **Election Law - Early Voting Centers - Bus Stops**

The Fair Elections Center has documented *How Ease of Access to Polling Locations Impacts Participation in Elections*<sup>1</sup>

...along with voter ID laws or registration deadlines, the physical location of polling places plays a major role in how accessible voting really is. These locations are not random. They are often chosen based on statutory requirements, as well as infrastructure limitations, and logistical considerations. These choices about polling place locations can help or hurt voter participation.

For many voters, especially college students, low-income families, and people living in rural areas, access to a polling place can make the difference between voting and not voting. If someone does not have a car, lives far from their assigned polling place, or lacks access to public transportation, casting a ballot in person can become a real challenge.

As noted by the Federal Transit Administration<sup>2</sup>

*Transit Programs Increase Access to Voting* Public transportation plays an important role connecting millions of Americans to jobs, vital services, and civic participation, including voting. Transit providers across the country are distinctly positioned to reduce some of the obstacles Americans face to exercising their sacred, fundamental right to vote.

This bill will help Marylanders access voting locations in response to the problem by requiring buses operating on fixed local routes funded by a county or municipal corporation and operated by a county or municipal corporation or a contractor for a county or municipal corporation to allow passengers to embark and disembark at the entrance of early voting centers located within one-half mile of the route.

**I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB#/0263.**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://fairelectionscenter.org/media/polling-locations-blog/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/transit-programs-increase-access-voting>