
By: **Delegate Marriott**

Introduced and read first time: February 3, 2005

Assigned to: Rules and Executive Nominations

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A House Joint Resolution concerning

2 **Voting Rights Amendment**

3 FOR the purpose of calling on the United States Congress to enact an amendment to
4 the United States Constitution that guarantees an individual citizenship right
5 to vote.

6 WHEREAS, The General Assembly of Maryland is proud of its long and
7 distinguished tradition of fighting for, protecting, and preserving the right to vote;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, The General Assembly of Maryland has a diverse constituency; and

10 WHEREAS, The United States Constitution does not presently guarantee an
11 individual citizenship right to vote, but provides only for nondiscrimination in voting
12 on the basis of race, sex, and age; and

13 WHEREAS, In the case of Bush v. Gore (2000), the United States Supreme
14 Court declared that "the individual citizen has no federal constitutional right to vote
15 for electors for the President of the United States"; and

16 WHEREAS, Voting in the United States is a state right overseen by
17 approximately 13,000 different local election administrations, which have a wide
18 variety of voting standards and are therefore separate and unequal; and

19 WHEREAS, Due to this disparity, an individual's right to vote is different in
20 each state and local jurisdiction; and

21 WHEREAS, The separate and unequal nature of voting rights does damage to
22 American democracy, our electoral system, and the values that the General Assembly
23 of Maryland holds dear; and

24 WHEREAS, The United States Constitution should ensure the right to vote with
25 one universal standard that federal, state, and local governments enforce equally; and

26 WHEREAS, Only an amendment to the United States Constitution would give
27 Congress the power to establish a unitary voting system that would overcome the
28 separate and unequal administration of elections and grant equal protection under
29 the law for all voters; now, therefore, be it

1 RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the
2 General Assembly affirms its strong support for establishing an individual citizenship
3 right to vote in the United States Constitution; and be it further

4 RESOLVED, That the General Assembly supports efforts in the United States
5 Congress to enact a constitutional amendment that guarantees an individual
6 citizenship right to vote, and further supports state efforts to ratify such an
7 amendment; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of
9 Legislative Services to the Maryland Congressional Delegation: Senators Paul S.
10 Sarbanes and Barbara A. Mikulski, Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510;
11 and Representatives Wayne T. Gilchrest, C. A. Dutch Ruppersberger, III, Benjamin L.
12 Cardin, Albert R. Wynn, Steny Hamilton Hoyer, Roscoe G. Bartlett, Elijah E.
13 Cummings, and Christopher Van Hollen, Jr., House Office Building, Washington,
14 D.C. 20515; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of
16 Legislative Services to the Honorable Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr., Governor of Maryland;
17 the Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr., President of the Senate of Maryland; and
18 the Honorable Michael E. Busch, Speaker of the House of Delegates.