

SENATOR SARAH ELFRETH
Legislative District 30
Anne Arundel County

Budget and Taxation Committee

Subcommittees

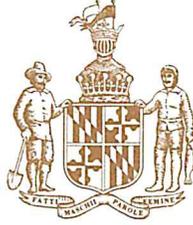
Education, Business and Administration

Chair, Pensions

Senate Chair

Joint Committee on Administrative,
Executive, and Legislative Review

Joint Committee on the Chesapeake and
Atlantic Coastal Bays Critical Area



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 6, 2020

Testimony in Favor of SB0204
Potomac Compact for Fair Representation

Chairman Pinsky, Vice-Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee,

I respectfully request a favorable report of Senate Bill 204. This bill would create an independent Congressional Districting Commission **only if** the Department of Legislative Services (DLS) determines on the advice of the Attorney General that Virginia has implemented a substantially similar process.

Nationwide, there has been a tremendous push towards fair and independent Congressional redistricting - from Michigan, to Hawaii and from California, to Colorado these reforms are more often than not led by Democratic states. We can all agree that our constituents deserve to have the utmost faith in our electoral process and that their communities are effectively represented. SB 204 is an important step into restoring that faith.

If DLS, in consultation with and on the advice of the Attorney General, determines that Virginia has enacted similar legislation then DLS has the authority to determine the size and composition of the Commission. DLS is required to include a demographer, cartographer, applied mathematician, a computer scientist, and a legal expert who specializes in election law on the Commission. Furthermore, all districts drawn by the Commission are required to consist of adjoining territory, be compact in form, and follow natural boundaries as well as political subdivisions.

Once again I respectfully request a favorable report of Senate Bill 204 so we can move forward and bring about this reform for not only Maryland but also our fellow State.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Sarah Elfreth'.

Sarah Elfreth