

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE EDUCATION, HEALTH,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

By Howard L. Gorrell

TITLE: Redistricting Reform Act of 2020

DATE: February 6, 2020

BILL NUMBER: SB 284

POSITION: SUPPORT

SYNOPSIS: Establishing the Legislative and Congressional Redistricting and Apportionment Commission as an independent unit of State government.

RATIONALE: My name is Howard Gorrell, and I had attended all 12 public hearing of the 2021 Governor's Redistricting Advisory Committee.

When the United States Supreme Court last June declared federal judges had no business deciding cases about political gerrymandering, it also said the state government had every right to address the issue.

How could the Marylanders end gerrymandering in the Free State? The ending could start in your Committee by voting in favor of the SB 284.

I know that some of your Committee members prefer to wait for the passage of the federal bill, H.R. 1 – “For the People Act of 2019,” sponsored by Rep. John P. Sarbanes (D). It includes a provision that provides for states to establish independent, non-partisan redistricting commissions.

I am telling you that there is a 4% chance of H.R. 1, according to Skopos Labs.

After reading the League of Women Voters of Maryland’s *2018 Voters' Guide*, I found out that there are enough votes to pass any Maryland legislation to create an independent redistricting commission based on the legislators’ answers to the question on the redistricting asked by the LWVMD: "What changes, if any, do you support in the process for drawing congressional and legislative district lines in Maryland?"

It is time for you to vote in favor of this bill.