



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony for HB 150 – State Government – House of Delegates – Bill Sponsorship Limit

Rules and Executive Nominations Committee

Good morning Chair, Vice Chair, and honorable members of the committee, my name is Del. Brian Crosby and it's an honor to present HB150, entitled State Government – House of Delegates – Bill Sponsorship Limit.

As many of you already know, the workload for legislators and legislative staffers has grown dramatically over the last few years. More than 2,500 bills were introduced to the General Assembly during the 2019 session, and only once since 2004 have we introduced fewer than 2,300. Yet for all this effort, fewer than one-third of the bills introduced pass both chambers and head towards the Governor's desk. Many of these bills fail, no doubt, because they overlook some policy concern, contain errors, or there is substantial opposition to the suggestion itself, but this could be remedied if there were more focus and attention available for even minor bills, let alone for major reform efforts which take hours upon hours of work. The drafters and policy analysts in the Department of Legislative Services are overwhelmed. Bills that we submit in August may not be delivered to us until January, and even then there are mistakes because the drafters are stuck juggling dozens of other bills a week. To make matters worse, not every bill that is drafted is introduced, so the numbers are likely much worse than we can concretely estimate.

This bill would limit each legislator in the House of Delegates to introducing 12 bills at max, although they may introduce up to 15 if they prefile three. There are also exceptions for bills introduced by request of the executive branch, state entities, or local jurisdictions, as well as those sponsored by a standing committee or county delegation. For those of you interested in the math, if each legislator hit the 15 bill cap, we would still have 2,115 bills to consider in a given session. That's still a large number, but it would force us to fairly consider and prioritize our legislative initiatives, and would grant us more time to create thoughtful testimony and organize stakeholders. These factors are critical to drafting cohesive and well-informed bills, and the Senate is currently operating under similar measures. In fact, I modeled this bill after President Ferguson's rules for the altered 2021 session.

For these reasons, I request a favorable report on this legislation from the committee, and I'm happy to take any questions at this time.