

**TESTIMONY OF JESSICA GORSKI**  
**Maryland WISE Women**  
**IN SUPPORT OF HB 1260,**  
**Anti-Gerrymandering of Maryland's Congressional Districts**  
**BEFORE HOUSE RULES & EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE**

Chairwoman Healey and Members of the House Rules & Executive Nominations Committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB 1260, for the purpose of proposing an amendment to the Maryland Constitution to require congressional districts to conform to certain standards, to prohibit the accounting for certain information relating to the voting history and party affiliation of certain individuals, and to require that due regard be given to certain boundaries; and submitting this amendment to the qualified voters of the State for their adoption or rejection. My name is Jessica Gorski, and I am member of the Leadership Team for Maryland WISE Women, an organization of over 800 women in Anne Arundel County. I also represent WISE as a member organization of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (MLC), a group of 40 grassroots organizations consisting of over 30,000 Marylanders statewide. We strongly encourage a favorable report for HB 1260. Gerrymandering is voter suppression, and it needs to end now.

In a democracy, we are supposed to choose our elected representatives. However, in some instances, through sophisticated partisan gerrymandering tactics, our representatives are really choosing their voters. Election Day is when we get to have our say, and we need to reform the rules so every vote matters. Arguably, the gerrymandering designs of North Carolina and Maryland are the most egregious examples in which elected officials made 'no bones about' an intent to discriminate against disfavored voters and create unfair maps. If we are going to fight for fair voting rights for all voters, we need to first take stock of our voting districts and ask are these examples of "packing and cracking" or they a fair representation of a contingent area? We cannot cry foul when arguing against another state's practices such as Georgia with their blatant voter suppression tactics used during the 2018 Gubernatorial race and the most recent presidential race in November 2020, and not address Maryland's current Rorschach inspired congressional districts and recognize our own culpability in voter suppression.

What issues do our legislators have with these bills? Every Maryland citizen deserves the right to register and vote. Why are those in power worried about taking politics out of redistricting and allowing voters to decide who will represent them rather than those in power deciding who will be elected? If we want to tout that we have a fair democracy in Maryland, then we need to stop the current egregious gerrymandering practices and redistrict in a way that reflects current changes in population and ensure that every Marylander is fairly represented. I urge you to vote today for those who votes are not being heard and return a favorable report for HB 1260. Thank you.