



BILL: HB0767

BILL TITLE: Montgomery County - Voting Methods MC 22-21

BILL SPONSOR: Ways and Means

POSITION: FAVORABLE

MEETING DATE: February 16, 2021

TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF HB0767

Cristi Demnowicz, Chair
Represent Maryland

Honorable Chair Kaiser, Vice-Chair Washington, and members of the Ways and Means Committee-

Represent Maryland is a grassroots pro-democracy organization with members and supporters in all 23 counties and Baltimore City, including many residents of Montgomery County. We advocate for a number of democracy solutions including Ranked Choice Voting.

We believe our current plurality voting method is no longer working. It's antiquated and lacks the nuance needed for modern elections. It's led to toxic elections and voters feeling coerced. Worst of all, it's made voters feel like their vote doesn't matter - a shameful truth in modern American politics. Both Ranked Choice Voting and Approval Voting are much better methods than what we currently use. They offer more nuance, and in places where they are used, voter participation has increased. Both alternatives make elections less toxic and result in more diversity of race, gender, and religion in legislatures.

The Montgomery County Council and the state delegation have both taken affirmative stances on using Ranked Choice Voting or Approval Voting for Montgomery County local elections. We believe all politics are local, so if lawmakers and voters of Montgomery County wish to use an alternative voting method for their elections, it's the responsibility of this committee to help make that happen. Please find this enabling legislation favorable so that Montgomery County can hold its elections in the way that works best for them.

Sincerely,
Cristi Demnowicz, Chair
Represent Maryland

Represent Maryland is a grassroots anti-corruption group of citizen advocates that #FightForDemocracy in Maryland. Our democracy solutions include: Public Election Funds, Independent Redistricting, Special Elections, Ranked Choice Voting, Increased Ethics and Transparency, and Increased Voter Participation. Learn more about our work at www.RepresentMaryland.org

Authorized by Represent Maryland PAC, T Miller, Treasurer