

**Testimony on HB0767**  
**Montgomery County – Voting Methods MC 22-21**  
**Ways and Means**

**Position: FAVORABLE**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I, Justin Gallardo of Parkville, an advocate of democratic reforms, support HB0767, “Montgomery County – Voting Methods MC 22-21.” The current system of plurality/first-past-the-post voting is antiquated and ineffective. It does not represent the will of the voters. The current system declares a winner even if a candidate has not won 50% or more of the voters. Our voting base is more diverse from age, education level, gender identity, income level, political philosophies, race, religious identity, and sexual orientation. Instead of incentivizing candidates to reach out to the greater community for support, the current system enables negative campaigning, which ultimately provides no confidence in our democracy. How can we expect voter participation and civic engagement when the system is so toxic? I am sick of the “lesser of two evils” argumentum!

This problem is not just a local or state issue – it is a national and international one. Candidates have been declared winners without winning a majority of the voters in US House races (**Exhibit 1**), US Senate races (**Exhibit 2**), Gubernatorial races (**Exhibit 3**), awarding Presidential Electors (**Exhibit 4**), and Parliamentary Elections (**Exhibit 5**). By looking at these examples, we have to ask ourselves, why did these voters NOT select the two major candidates? How can we AMPLIFY their voices? How can we better understand them? As elected officials, you represent voters who voted for you and those who did not vote for you. Ultimately, you want to retain those who voted for you and win the support of those that did not vote for you.

Maryland has a municipality with an alternative voting method, specifically Ranked Choice Voting (RCV), and that is the City of Takoma Park, located in Montgomery County just like this enabling legislation. They have used it since 2007. Montgomery County is a model for democratic reforms in this state. It was the first county to enable legislation for public election campaign financing. The system was utilized in the 2018 Elections. Since then, many counties across the state have adopted enabling legislation for public election campaign financing. Montgomery County can be a leader once more by adopting enabling legislation for alternative voting methods.

In 2018, Maine successfully used RCV for their state elections and US House races. In fact, an incumbent Congressman was unseated for the first time in that Congressional district since 1916. In 2020, Maine again used RCV in their US Senate race and to award the Electors of the Presidential race. Ultimately, I would love to see Maryland adopt RCV statewide; however, let us give Montgomery County the honor to lead this path!

**(Exhibit 1): House Races, 2020**

Minnesota's 1st district			Minnesota's 2nd district		
Republicans <b>held</b> this seat			Democrats <b>held</b> this seat		
CANDIDATE	VOTES	PCT.	CANDIDATE	VOTES	PCT.
Jim Hagedorn* <b>GOP</b> ✓	179,234	48.6%	Angie Craig* <b>DEM</b> ✓	204,534	48.2%
Dan Feehan <b>DEM</b>	167,890	45.6%	Tyler Kistner <b>GOP</b>	194,954	46%
100% of precincts reporting (697/697) *Incumbent			100% of precincts reporting (289/289) *Incumbent		

Nevada's 3rd district			Texas' 24th district		
Democrats <b>held</b> this seat			Republicans <b>held</b> this seat		
CANDIDATE	VOTES	PCT.	CANDIDATE	VOTES	PCT.
Susie Lee* <b>DEM</b> ✓	203,421	48.8%	Beth Van Duyne <b>GOP</b> ✓	167,910	48.8%
Dan Rodimer <b>GOP</b>	190,975	45.8%	Candace Valenzuela <b>DEM</b>	163,326	47.5%
100% of precincts reporting (430/430) *Incumbent			100% of precincts reporting (352/352)		

Utah's 4th district		
Republicans <b>flipped</b> this seat		
CANDIDATE	VOTES	PCT.
Burgess Owens <b>GOP</b> ✓	179,688	47.7%
Ben McAdams* <b>DEM</b>	175,923	46.7%
100% of precincts reporting (558/558) *Incumbent		

(Source: Politico)

**(Exhibit 2): Senate Races, 2020**

**Michigan U.S. Senate results**

Democrats **held** this seat

CANDIDATE	VOTES	PCT.
Gary Peters* <b>DEM</b> ✓	2,734,568	49.9%
John James <b>GOP</b>	2,642,233	48.2%
99% of expected vote in *Incumbent		

**Minnesota U.S. Senate results**

Democrats **held** this seat

CANDIDATE	VOTES	PCT.
Tina Smith* <b>DEM</b> ✓	1,566,522	48.8%
Jason Lewis <b>GOP</b>	1,398,145	43.5%
100% of expected vote in *Incumbent		

**North Carolina U.S. Senate results**

Republicans **held** this seat

CANDIDATE	VOTES	PCT.
Thom Tillis* <b>GOP</b> ✓	2,665,598	48.7%
Cal Cunningham <b>DEM</b>	2,569,965	46.9%
100% of expected vote in *Incumbent		

(Source: Politico)

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**(Exhibit 3): Gubernatorial Races, 2018**

Connecticut				Florida			
100% reporting				100% reporting			
Candidate	Party	Votes	Pct.	Candidate	Party	Votes	Pct.
✓ Ned Lamont	Dem.	694,510	49.4%	✓ Ron DeSantis	Rep.	4,076,186	49.6%
Bob Stefanowski	Rep.	650,138	46.2	Andrew Gillum	Dem.	4,043,723	49.2
Oz Griebel	Ind.	54,741	3.9	Darcy Richardson	Reform	47,140	0.6

Kansas				Nevada			
100% reporting				100% reporting			
Candidate	Party	Votes	Pct.	Candidate	Party	Votes	Pct.
✓ Laura Kelly	Dem.	506,509	48.0%	✓ Steve Sisolak	Dem.	480,007	49.4%
Kris Kobach	Rep.	453,030	43.0	Adam Laxalt	Rep.	440,320	45.3
Greg Orman	Ind.	68,498	6.5	None of these candidates	—	18,865	1.9

Wisconsin			
100% reporting			
Candidate	Party	Votes	Pct.
✓ Tony Evers	Dem.	1,324,307	49.6%
Scott Walker*	Rep.	1,295,080	48.5
Phil Anderson	Lib.	20,225	0.8



(Source: New York Times)

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**(Exhibit 4): Presidential Electors, 2020**

**Arizona presidential results**


Democrats **flipped** this seat

CANDIDATE	VOTES	PCT.
Joe Biden <b>DEM</b> ✓	1,672,143	49.4% 
Donald Trump* <b>GOP</b>	1,661,686	49.1% 

100% of expected vote in \*Incumbent

**Georgia presidential results**



Democrats **flipped** this seat

CANDIDATE	VOTES	PCT.
Joe Biden <b>DEM</b> ✓	2,473,633	49.5% 
Donald Trump* <b>GOP</b>	2,461,854	49.3% 

100% of expected vote in \*Incumbent

**Wisconsin presidential results**

Democrats **flipped** this seat

CANDIDATE	VOTES	PCT.
Joe Biden <b>DEM</b> ✓	1,630,866	49.6% 
Donald Trump* <b>GOP</b>	1,610,184	48.9% 

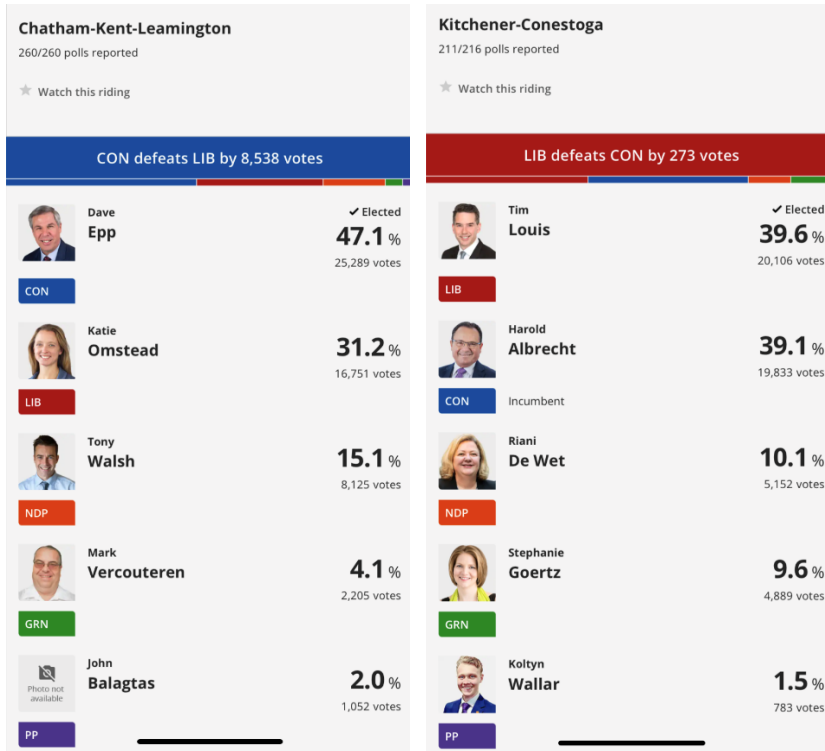
100% of expected vote in \*Incumbent

(Source: Politico)

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**(Exhibit 5): Parliamentary Elections, 2019**

Canada:



(Source: CBC News)

United Kingdom:

**Kensington** Parliamentary constituency



Results

Conservative	<b>Felicity Buchan</b>	Votes: 16,768	Vote share %: 38.3	Vote share change: -3.9
Labour	<b>Emma Dent Coad</b>	Votes: 16,618	Vote share %: 38.0	Vote share change: -4.3
Liberal Democrat	<b>Sam Gyimah</b>	Votes: 9,312	Vote share %: 21.3	Vote share change: +9.1

**Makerfield** Parliamentary constituency



Results

Labour	<b>Yvonne Fovargue</b>	Votes: 19,954	Vote share %: 45.1	Vote share change: -15.1
Conservative	<b>Nick King</b>	Votes: 15,214	Vote share %: 34.4	Vote share change: +3.0
The Brexit Party	<b>Ross Wright</b>	Votes: 5,817	Vote share %: 13.1	Vote share change: +13.1

(Source: BBC)

Justin Gallardo, HB0767, Favorable  
February 16, 2021

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