

# REPRESENT MARYLAND

.ORG

#FIGHT FOR DEMOCRACY

**BILL:** HB0163

**BILL TITLE:** State Board of Elections - Membership - Appointments

**BILL SPONSOR:** Delegate Julian Ivey

**POSITION:** FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

**COMMITTEE:** Ways and Means

**Hearing Date:** January 19, 2021

## TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF HB0163

Cristi Demnowicz, Chair  
Represent Maryland

Represent Maryland is an all-volunteer, member and individual donor-funded group of activists and advocates who fight for democracy at the local and state level. We support Del. Ivey's goal of expanding the number of people who decide an appointment to the Maryland State Board of Elections (SBE), but believe his legislation, HB0163, should be amended to reflect an approach that includes the senate president and speaker of the house in addition to, rather than as a replacement of, the governor. Additionally, we believe there should be parity and knowledge requirements of appointees, to create a board that is race, gender, and income diverse, and so all members understand the history and processes of Maryland voter systems before taking on this heavy responsibility.

Because the State Board of Elections is made up of five members that represent both principal political parties, we believe appointments should be decided through thoughtful discussion between the governor and the two presiding officers of the Legislature until a consensus is reached. This way, if there are differing parties in charge of the executive and legislative branches, both majority and minority party voices can have a fair hand in deciding diverse SBE appointments.

And, in the spirit of democracy and fairness, we also suggest that the legislation be amended to require that the appointees be decided using ranked choice voting (RCV) so that more candidates may be considered and so that the best candidates are selected.

We ask that you find this bill favorable with these suggested amendments.

Cristi Demnowicz, Chair  
Represent Maryland  
Maryland Voter-LD7

---

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](http://www.RepresentMaryland.org)