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House of Representatives  
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Delegate Samuel I. Rosenberg  
Democrat, District 41, Baltimore City  
House Office Building, Room 365  
6 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Delegate Rosenberg:

I write to commend your efforts to ensure the integrity of Maryland election systems. It is critical that officials at every level of government take seriously the threat of election interference and work to ensure free and fair elections.

During the 2016 election cycle, the United States experienced unprecedented attacks on our nation's election infrastructure. State and local election systems across the country were breached by hostile foreign actors.<sup>1</sup> While there is no evidence that any vote tallies were ultimately altered, the experience was a stark reminder that election officials and policymakers must remain vigilant.<sup>2</sup> Given the decentralized nature of our nation's election systems, state and local policymakers have a special responsibility to ensure that our elections remain secure and that best security practices are adopted.

House Bill 392 embraces that responsibility, requiring the Maryland State Board of Elections to certify that the State's election systems comply with the guidelines issued by the United States Election Assistance Commission (EAC), pursuant to the Help America Vote Act. HB392 also takes important steps to secure the supply chain of our election infrastructure, while simplifying election system software oversight.

In Congress, we have vigorously pursued complementary reforms to ensure the integrity of our elections. I have been proud to help lead this work as Chair of the Democracy Reform Task Force in the House of Representatives. This past December, we were successful in securing \$425 million in election security funding for states to upgrade and secure existing election

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<sup>1</sup> See "REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE UNITED STATES SENATE ON RUSSIAN ACTIVE MEASURES CAMPAIGNS AND INTERFERENCE IN THE 2016 U.S. ELECTION, United States Senate Committee on Intelligence (July 2019).

[https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Report\\_Volume1.pdf](https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Report_Volume1.pdf)

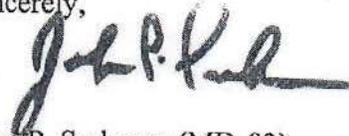
<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

systems. This critical support builds on the previously appropriated \$380 million to the EAC for allocation to states to improve election security in 2018, of which the State of Maryland received approximately \$7 million. Still, we must do more to increase the oversight and security of our election system. For example, I strongly support the creation of a national certification program to provide routine monitoring of election infrastructure vendors in an effort to inspire greater confidence in the companies that help execute our elections. At the same time, we must work as a nation to close loopholes that allow foreign disinformation and illicit foreign campaign activity.<sup>3</sup> Such legislative reforms were included in the For the People Act (H.R. 1), the SAFE Act (H.R. 2722) and the SHIELD Act (H.R. 4617). I was proud to help author and pass these critical measures in the House of Representatives. Unfortunately, these reforms – and others like them – have been opposed by the Republican-controlled Senate.

Election security should not be a partisan issue. All Americans deserve and expect their votes to count, unencumbered by foreign or domestic interference. While partisanship has, for the time being, delayed comprehensive federal reform efforts, Maryland has an opportunity to once again lead the nation by adopting additional common-sense reforms to ensure the integrity of the vote and our elections.

I applaud your efforts.

Sincerely,



John P. Sarbanes (MD-03)  
Member of Congress

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<sup>3</sup> The Senate has refused to take up either piece of legislation, nor have they considered for a vote any alternative election security reform proposals.