REPRESENT MARYLAND #FIGHT FOR DEMOCRACY .ORG

BILL: HB0656 BILL TITLE: Election Law - Early Voting Centers - Accessibility by Public Transportation BILL SPONSOR: Delegate Crosby COMMITTEE: Ways and Means POSITION: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS HEARING DATE: February 9, 2021

FWV Testimony for HB0656

Cristi Demnowicz, Chair Represent Maryland

Chair Kaiser, Vice-Chair Washington, and Members of the committee,

Represent Maryland, our all-volunteer, grassroots pro-democracy group with members and supporters across the State of Maryland, is in support of HB0656 as it increases ease and access to voting for people who rely on public transportation to reach their polling station. Requiring polling stations to be near public transportation stops - whether during early voting or on election day - is especially important to voters who use mobility-assistance devices such as walkers and wheel-chairs.

However we believe this bill should be amended to be made stronger and in-line with another bill that has been heard by this committee: HB0493, which calls for this same change PLUS the addition of requiring all voting drop boxes to be accessible to voters who use mobility assistance devices such as wheelchairs, etc. These changes should apply to all polling stations, both during early voting and on election day.

Represent Maryland does not see any reason to piece-meal legislation that increases *physical* access to voting so we hope the committee will pass a strong and comprehensive voter accessibility bill this session.

Sincerely, Cristi Demnowicz Chair Represent Maryland Maryland Voter-LD07

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 Ethics and Transparency, and Increased Voter Participation.Learn more about our work at www.RepresentMaryland.org Authorized by Represent Maryland PAC, T Miller, Treasurer