



**BILL: HB0362**

**BILL TITLE: Montgomery County - Voting Methods**

**BILL SPONSOR: Montgomery County Delegation**

**POSITION: FAVORABLE**

**HEARING DATE: Feb 8, 2021**

### **TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF HB0362**

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 first-past-the-post voting method is no longer working. It's antiquated and lacks the nuance needed for modern elections. It's led to toxic elections and makes voters feel coerced. Worst of all, it makes 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 class, 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 voters can cast their votes in a way that works for them.

Sincerely,  
Cristi Demnowicz, Chair  
Represent Maryland

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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)  
Authorized by Represent Maryland PAC, T Miller, Treasurer