



**TESTIMONY FOR HB0417**  
**General Assembly - Special Election to Fill a Vacancy in Office**

**Bill Sponsor:** Delegate Foley

**Committee:** Ways and Means

**Organization Submitting:** Maryland Legislative Coalition

**Person Submitting:** Cecilia Plante, co-chair

**Position:** FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0417 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Our members would like to ensure, as much as possible, that *their* vote for candidates for the General Assembly is what elects its members. We understand that events happen that cause a duly elected member of the General Assembly to vacate their seat between election cycles and we approve of the process of nominating and confirming a replacement. However, if a seat is vacated early in the term, the constituents of that district are essentially being represented by a person they did not elect for an extended period of time. This seems like an opportunity for change.

This bill would require the Governor to call a special election depending on when the replacement member is seated. If the legislator is seated on or before the date that is 55 days before the deadline for filing certificates of candidacy, a special election will be called. We believe that this will ensure that the replacement member will only serve out the term if it is too late to announce candidacy for the next Primary or General election.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.