



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401
ST. MARY'S COUNTY DELEGATION

Delegate Vanessa Atterbeary
Chairman - House Ways and Means Committee

RE: HB 597 St. Mary's County- County Commissioners Election Method- Straw Ballot
FAVORABLE

Chairman Atterbeary and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to present **HB 597 St. Mary's County- County Commissioners Election Method- Straw Ballot** on behalf of the St. Mary's County Delegation.

Unity is at the heart of St. Mary's County, and it is in all our best interests that the entire county prospers. That's why each person who resides here votes to select all five Commissioners that govern our county. By casting a vote for all five commissioners, we will ensure that each region of the county is considered when determining how to allocate our resources and tax money.

Unfortunately, a bill, **HB 447**, was introduced, which will significantly diminish constituent's voting power in St. Mary's County local elections by decreasing the number of commissioners they can select. Currently, constituents have the right to vote for all commissioner candidates on their ballots.

The current system is fair and equitable and has served St. Mary's County well for over 180 years. However, it is unfair and almost **unconscionable** to take away the power of citizens' vote without allowing them first to share their opinions at the ballot box.

St. Mary's County's citizens should be allowed to resolve this issue for themselves.

This bill has Delegation support and the local support of the St. Mary's County Commissioners. Please give this bill a FAVORABLE report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Matt Morgan".

Chair - St. Mary's County Delegation