

SB0029_RichardKaplowitz_FAV
1/30/2024

Richard Keith Kaplowitz
Frederick, MD 21703

TESTIMONY ON SB#/0029 - FAVORABLE
Special Elections – Procedures and General Assembly Vacancies and Ties

TO: Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy and the Environment

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard K. Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB#0029, Special Elections – Procedures and General Assembly Vacancies and Ties

Elections are held so that the voters can pick who should represent their interest in Annapolis. However, that is not what is currently happening. Statewide, 23% of the 188-member General Assembly first acquired their seats through appointment: 20% of the 141-person House of Delegates and one-third of the 47-member state Senate, according to figures published this past October by Common Cause

This situation is the opposite of having a representative democracy in Maryland when it is only the small number of political party committee members are picking the replacements without the involvement and consent of the voters who elected the member being replaced. This bill is an attempt to correct that situation and return us to a state where the voters pick their leaders, not their leaders picking themselves or their friends to serve in the General Assembly.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB#0029.