



St Mary's Republican Club
St Mary's County, Maryland

HB 0081 Constitutional Amendment - Form of County Government - Requirement to Adopt Charter Home Rule

Sponsor: Delegate Bouchet

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Position: **Unfavorable**

We ask for an **UNFAVORABLE** vote from the Committee on this bill.

According to Article 1 of the Maryland Constitution Declaration of Rights

We, the People of the State of Maryland, grateful to Almighty God for our civil and religious liberty, and taking into our serious consideration the best means of establishing a good Constitution in this State for the sure foundation and more permanent security thereof, declare:

Article 1. That all Government of right originates from the People, is founded in compact only, and instituted solely for the good of the whole; and they have, at all times, the inalienable right to alter, reform or abolish their Form of Government in such manner as they may deem expedient.

Therefore, the government of St Mary's County is determined by the citizens of St Mary's County ONLY. No other person or entity has the authority to establish the style of government in our county.

Accordingly, if we choose to change our government at the county level, the request would come from our County Delegation on behalf of the citizens and supported by the County Commissioners and various other organizations in the county and individual citizens. Therefore, since Delegate Bouchet is not a citizen of St Mary's County, he has no authority to bring forth this bill on our behalf. This bill was neither proposed by a St Mary's citizen, supported by the County Government nor brought forth by the Delegation.

In 2016, the citizens of St Mary's County voted against moving to a home rule government with a result of 59.3% against the proposal. Prior to the vote, the County Commissioners held a series of hearings to educate the citizens about a different style of government and to determine the desire for change. The citizens clearly answered the question by voting against the change. Prior to submitting his bill, Delegate Bouchet did not inform nor ASK the citizens to change our government structure.

Article XI-A has served the state local governments well for the last 31 years since last ratified on November 3 1992. No major incident has occurred to lead us to believe it requires change.

Again, we ask for an **UNFAVORABLE** report on HB 81.

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