

Senator Brian Feldman, Chair
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chairman Feldman and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

The Center for Election Science, a leader in the implementation of approval voting, would like to submit this information for **Senate Bill 383: Elections - Ranked-Choice Voting in Contests for Presidential Nomination and Certification of Election-Supporting Technology**. While we may disagree with the method of voting proposed under this legislation, we support innovation in the use of voting methods in competitive races.

Founded in 2011, the Center for Election Science (CES) is a national, nonpartisan nonprofit focused on voting reform. CES seeks to empower people with voting methods that strengthen democracy. By implementing approval voting, which allows voters to pick all of the candidates they like on their ballot, we believe citizens will be able to more clearly and effectively express their support for candidates who truly represent their communities.

In our research, we have found that approval voting leads to more equitable and transparent outcomes. We also have found that elected officials that have won elections where approval voting was used were more representative of the communities they lead. To that end, we have attached to this testimony our recent report entitled *America Misrepresented* outlining our findings.

We believe that it is important for Maryland's elections community to come together to discuss reforms whether its Approval Voting, Ranked Choice Voting, STAR Voting or any other innovation. We believe a truly unbiased task force or study on these different reforms may be the key in ensuring that Marylanders' votes are counted in the most transparent and equitable way.

We look forward to continuing our work in Maryland with elections officials on the benefits of approval voting, and wholeheartedly support any efforts making elections more transparent and equitable for all voters.

For more information on the Center for Election Science's work on approval voting, please visit: electionscience.org.

Sincerely,

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