



Ella Ennis, Legislative Chairman
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The Honorable Brian Feldman
and Members of the Education, Energy and Environment Committee
Senate of Maryland
Annapolis, Maryland

RE: **SB0383** – Ranked Choice Voting for Presidential Nominations and Certification of Election Technology - **OPPOSED**

Dear Chairman Feldman and Committee Members,

The 1,154 members of the Maryland Federation of Republican Women urge an **UNFAVORABLE** Report for SB0383 – Ranked Choice Voting for Presidential Nominations and Certification of Election Technology.

- Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) is a **complex voting method**.
 - It will take significantly **longer** for a voter **to complete their ballot**.
 - Voters exasperated with the complicated RCV ballot may skip down-ballot (local) races. Statistics already show a decrease in the number of votes cast in those very important **down-ballot races**, including school board races.
 - Participation by voters in Presidential Primary elections is already low. Adding additional steps to the process will only **confuse and discourage voters**.
 - **Mailed ballot voters** will have no one present to explain the new complicated process.
 - **Election results** will be **delayed** while multiple rounds of vote counting are completed. Delays in reporting vote totals **undermine citizens' confidence in election results**.
- **National political party convention delegates** are chosen in presidential election years. Some are pledged to and endorsed by a specific candidate. RCV will conflict with those processes.
- Extensive **voter education** will be needed.
 - The SB0383 Fiscal Note (2025) shows an expenditure of State General Funds of \$500K for voter outreach, but there is no expenditure for voter outreach by local governments. The HB0423 Fiscal Note (2024) projected that cost for Montgomery County (just one of Maryland's 24 jurisdictions) at \$210K.



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- **Implementation will be costly.**

- Implementation costs projected by SB0383 Fiscal Note:

State General Funds	Local government funds (<u>collectively</u>)
FY2027 - \$501,000	FY2027 - \$100,000
FY2028 - \$1,883,000	FY2028 - \$1.7million

- Fiscal Note projections are suspect.
 - The Fiscal Note for SB0383 reports dramatically lower implementation costs than the Fiscal Note for HB0423 in 2024, which projected RCV implementation costs for Montgomery County alone at \$1.1 million in FY2026, by approximately \$601K in FY2027, by \$538K in FY2028, and by \$505K in FY2029.

For the above reasons, we encourage an **UNFAVORABLE** report for **SB0383**.

Sincerely,
Ella Ennis
Legislative Chairman
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