



Ella Ennis, Legislative Chairman
Maryland Federation of Republican Women
PO Box 6040, Annapolis MD 21401
Email: eee437@comcast.net

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The Honorable Vanessa Atterbeary, Chairman
and Members of the Ways and Means Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
Annapolis, Maryland

RE: **HB 1044** – Maryland Voting Rights Act of 2025 – Preclearance and Voter Intimidation and Obstruction
UNFAVORABLE

Dear Chairman Atterbeary and Committee Members,

The 1,154 members of the Maryland Federation of Republican Women strongly oppose HB1044 – *Voting Rights Act of 2025 – Preclearance and Voter Intimidation and Obstruction* for these reasons:

- HB1044 gives special preference to a “protected class” but **does not define “protected class”**. Election protections are already codified in the Federal Voting Rights Act of 1965, declaring that **all voters must be treated equally** and must have an **equal voice** in all elections.
- The proposed legislation **will override county and municipal governing documents**, forcing jurisdictions to replace their legally-chosen voting method with an alternative voting method that is unfamiliar to voters and often more cumbersome. Election chaos will ensue -- confused voters (some choosing not to vote) and increased wait times at the polls, especially if methods such as ranked-choice voting are imposed.
- The **powers granted to the Attorney General** under this legislation are **extremely broad**. They could be used to intimidate and coerce counties, municipalities, and boards of education to change method and timing of elections and the number of members through a “covered policy” **without citizen input**.
- Under 15.5-207, organizations whose mission would be frustrated by a violation or who would expend resources to fulfill its mission as a result of a violation gives organizations (within and outside Maryland) **more rights than Maryland citizens**.

Our democracy was founded on the principle of “one-person, one-vote”. Requiring **voter ID** is the best method to ensure that an individual’s vote has not been stolen by another, yet that protection was not included in this bill. We encourage an **UNFAVORABLE** Report for **HB 1044**.

Sincerely,
Ella Ennis, Legislative Chairman
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