



Testimony - HB 1044, Maryland Voting Rights Act of 2025 - Preclearance and Voter
Intimidation and Obstruction

Favorable

House Ways & Means Committee

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Director of Political & Legislative Affairs on Behalf of SEIU Local 500

Honorable Chairwoman Atterbeary & Members of the House Ways & Means Committee:

SEIU Local 500 represents over 23,000 workers across Maryland. Our members are politically engaged because politics often touches every aspect of not just their lives but their livelihoods. And, like any other American, they hold their right to vote as both civic duty and sacred right. It is for these reasons we express my strong support for House Bill 1044, the Maryland Voting Rights Act of 2025 – Preclearance and Voter Intimidation and Obstruction. This crucial legislation strengthens the integrity of our democratic process by ensuring that local governments uphold fair voting practices and by protecting voters from intimidation and obstruction.

House Bill 1044 establishes a necessary preclearance process for certain voting-related changes in jurisdictions with a history of discrimination. This measure is vital to preventing policies that could disproportionately impact protected communities and disenfranchise voters. By requiring approval from the Attorney General or the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County before enacting or implementing changes, the bill provides a safeguard against discriminatory practices that might otherwise go unnoticed.

Additionally, HB 1044 explicitly prohibits acts of voter intimidation and obstruction, ensuring that all Maryland citizens can exercise their right to vote without fear or interference. These provisions reinforce existing protections and provide clear legal remedies for those who face unjust barriers at the polls.

Voting is the cornerstone of our democracy, and every effort must be made to guarantee that all Marylanders—regardless of race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status—have equal access to the ballot box. HB 1044 is a necessary step toward achieving that goal and maintaining public confidence in our electoral system.

We urge the committee to support House Bill 1044 and move it forward in the legislative process. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Christopher C. Cano, MPA
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SEIU Local 500