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TESTIMONY ON HB#/0215- POSITION: FAVORABLE

**Elections - Ranked-Choice Voting in Contests for Presidential Nomination and Certification
of Election-Supporting Technology**

TO: Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and members of the Ways and Means Committee
FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#/0215, **Elections - Ranked-Choice Voting in Contests for Presidential Nomination and Certification of Election-Supporting Technology**

This bill will authorize the State Board of Elections, beginning with the 2028 statewide primary election, to use ranked-choice voting to conduct a contest for the nomination by a political party of a candidate for the office of President of the United States. Results in the elections in 2024 show this system is not well understood and thus is facing resistance, much of it driven by misinformation on the Cons of adoption of the system. Maryland has a chance, with its highly educated populace, to be educated about the system and choose to be a leader in the transition to ranked choice voting.

There are both Pros and Cons to adoption of ranked choice voting. On November 5, 2024, voters decided on 10 ballot measures related to [electoral systems](#).¹

The organization RankedVote has looked at both Pros and Cons.² The advantages to ranked choice voting include:

Determines the candidate with the strongest support, encourages civil campaigning, reduces wasted votes, eliminates the need for multiple elections, and has cost savings for jurisdictions.

The Common Critiques of Ranked Choice Voting are:

It's too complicated, too expensive, it only helps Democrats (or Republicans), the person with the most votes can lose, your vote might not count if it's "exhausted", it delays the results and it violates "one person, one vote"

¹ [https://ballotpedia.org/Results_for_ranked-choice_voting_\(RCV\)_and_electoral_system_ballot_measures,_2024](https://ballotpedia.org/Results_for_ranked-choice_voting_(RCV)_and_electoral_system_ballot_measures,_2024)

² <https://www.rankedyote.co/guides/understanding-ranked-choice-voting/pros-and-cons-of-rcv>

This bill can also help Maryland take advantage of the changes in technology designed to make our election systems more user friendly and more secure. It will mandate the State Board to adopt regulations for the review, certification, and decertification of election-supporting technology and to periodically review and evaluate election-supporting technology. That required period review will ensure this review and evaluation provides data on how well the technology is functioning in its adaptation.

I believe the Pros benefits outweigh the Cons and support this change to help make our elections more about appealing to all voters and not just a politician's base. Moderation in our politics to appeal to every voter instead of the political extremes should force better representation of all voters.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB#/0215.