

Thanh Trieu Nguyen  
7709 Stanmore Dr  
Beltsville, MD 20705

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Economic Matters Committee  
Oppose House Bill 0514 (HB0514) / Senate Bill 4 (SB 4)

Dear Delegates and Senator of Maryland for District 4,

My name is Thanh Trieu Nguyen, and I am a constituent residing in District 4. I am writing to respectfully express my opposition to House Bill 0514/Senate Bill 4 and to urge you to vote against it. I believe this legislation threatens our First Amendment rights by placing unconstitutional conditions on nonprofit status, effectively pressuring churches and ministries to limit their freedom of speech and expression. Such a requirement contradicts the very principles upon which our nation was founded. Churches and religious ministries have long held the right to speak on matters of public life, including issues and individuals involved in governance.

In July 2025, the IRS proposed a consent judgment in *National Religious Broadcasters v. Werfel*, acknowledging that not all political discussion from the pulpit constitutes prohibited campaign intervention. This judgment restricts the IRS from enforcing the Johnson Amendment in ways that would silence churches' protected speech. In contrast, HB 0514/SB 4 appears to move in the opposite direction by seeking to impose new restrictions and penalties on churches exercising their constitutional freedoms.

As a Christian, my decisions are guided by my faith and my commitment to live according to God's will. The ability to discuss political issues and candidates within my church community is essential for making informed decisions that align with my beliefs and values. This bill threatens my freedom to integrate my faith with my civic responsibilities and to engage in open dialogue with my community.

At a time when our nation is deeply divided and civil discourse is increasingly difficult, it is more important than ever to protect the freedoms that define us. Yielding ground on free speech risks undermining the foundation of liberty itself. As Thomas Jefferson warned, "The time to guard against corruption and tyranny is before they shall have gotten hold on us." Likewise, John Adams cautioned that once freedom is lost, it may never be fully restored.

I respectfully urge you to stand in defense of our constitutional rights and vote against House Bill 0514/Senate Bill 4. Protecting these freedoms today is essential to preserving liberty for future generations.

Sincerely,  
Thanh Trieu Nguyen