

Jason Lee
1803 Manet Court
Severn, MD 21144

February 16th, 2026

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

Dear Delegates of Maryland,

My name is Jason Lee and I am a constituent residing in District 32. I am writing this letter to express my opposition towards House Bill 0514/Senate Bill 4 and I implore you to oppose this bill as it is a violation of our First Amendment Rights; an act to silence freedom of speech and thought. To condition nonprofit status on the terms of surrendering our First Amendment Rights is unconstitutional and goes against what our nation was founded upon. It is the right of churches and ministries to speak about public life and those who seek to govern.

Recently, in July 2025, the IRS proposed a consent judgement for the case of *National Religious Broadcasters v. Werfel* where the IRS recognized that not all candid political talk from the pulpit is forbidden campaign intervention. This consent judgement restricts the IRS from enforcing the Johnson Amendment against churches, yet HB 0514/SB 4 is attempting to restrict and punish churches that are exercising their freedom.

As a Christian, the decisions I make are rooted in my desire to obey and do what pleases God on all matters of life. The freedom to vote for and speak about politics, including the candidates, within the church is paramount to my ability to make informed decisions that align with the truth of the Bible. This freedom to exercise my right to dialogue between my conscience, God, and my community is being threatened by this bill. HB 0514/SB 4 will directly restrict my freedom to tie my faith convictions with specific issues, parties, and candidates.

In a time where division is rampant across the people of this nation with the inability to acknowledge differing ideas from opposing views without anger or violence, we need to stand firm in protecting the freedom our nation was founded upon. To give in to the oppression of free speech is to draw nearer to tyranny. I would like to leave you with two quotes from Thomas Jefferson and John Adams respectively: "The time to guard against corruption and tyranny, is before they shall have gotten hold on us." "But a Constitution of Government once changed from Freedom, can never be restored. Liberty once lost is lost forever. When the People once surrender their share in the Legislature, and their Right of defending the Limitations upon the Government, and of resisting every Encroachment upon them, they can never regain it."

I beseech you to take action and to not tolerate HB 0514/SB 4. Our tolerance to such things will be the beginning of our loss of freedom. Please, vote against House Bill 0514/Senate Bill 4.

Best regards,
Jason Lee