

I firmly reject this bill because it conflicts with the First Amendment, which protects our freedom of speech, religion, and association. These are fundamental rights, not privileges the government can withdraw when it disagrees with what is being said.

This bill would allow the State of Maryland to penalize churches and religious organizations by imposing fines or removing tax exemptions if they speak about candidates or elections. That is not neutral regulation—it pressures faith communities to remain silent out of fear.

The First Amendment exists to protect citizens, churches, and religious leaders from government coercion. For these reasons, I firmly reject this bill.