

Re: House Bill 1448 — Municipal Elections Position: Favorable with Amendments

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the EEE Committee:

My name is Liza Smith, and I am an elected member of the Montgomery County Democratic Central Committee representing District 14. I have spent years advocating for voting rights, transparency, and strengthening democratic participation across Maryland.

I support HB 1448, with a targeted amendment to ensure transparency and consistency in municipalities that use ranked choice voting.

As jurisdictions adopt new voting methods, voters deserve clear, accessible information not only about when and where to vote, but also how their ballots are counted. Public trust depends on it.

To strengthen this bill, municipalities that use ranked choice voting should be required to submit their ballot tabulation procedures to the State Board of Elections for review and approval, ensuring those procedures are consistent, transparent, and compatible with state voting systems.

This is a practical step that reinforces accountability while supporting innovation in our election systems.

I appreciate the sponsors' work to bring greater awareness and structure to municipal elections, and I respectfully urge the Committee to adopt this amendment while advancing the bill.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully, Liza Smith