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Joint Audit and Evaluation Committee
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SB962 Testimony: Preventing Insurrectionists from Holding Public Office

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Tuesday, March 17, 2026 1PM

The January 6, 2021 attack on the U.S. Capitol was a direct assault on the peaceful transfer of power and the rule of law. On that day, thousands of people came to Washington, D.C., to rally on the Ellipse. This gathering was peaceful and lawful, protected by the First Amendment's guarantees of free speech and freedom to assemble. Unfortunately, what began as a legal demonstration degenerated into a violent attack on the Capitol by an angry mob. Law enforcement officers were assaulted with flagpoles, stun guns, crutches, bear spray, and stolen police shields. Five officers died as a result of physical or emotional injuries suffered that day.

Over the months and years that followed, hundreds of individuals were arrested and prosecuted. Ultimately, roughly 250 were convicted of crimes ranging from assault and weapons offenses to seditious conspiracy and trespassing. On his Inauguration Day, Donald Trump issued a blanket pardon for these convictions. The record of their criminal conduct remains. Those who were convicted of crimes related to the insurrection have demonstrated an intent to undermine constitutional government and should not ever be entrusted with positions of public authority.

SB962, co-sponsored by **every** Democratic Senator, would prohibit any individual convicted of participating in the January 6, 2021 insurrection from serving on any state board, commission, workgroup, task force, or other entity that exercises public power or public trust. This legislation would establish clear and objective standards to prevent individuals who engaged in insurrectionary conduct from holding positions that shape public policy, oversee public resources, or exercise governmental authority. It affirms that service in public office or on boards and commissions is an honor and a responsibility-- one that should only be entrusted to individuals who respect democracy and the Constitution.

This bill draws a bright line of accountability and consequences. By establishing objective standards, Maryland can reinforce the principle that violent insurrection and attacks on our democracy are incompatible with public service.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report on SB962.