

Testimony on HB580 - Favorable
Montgomery County - Voting Methods
House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee

Hearing date: Feb 18, 2026

From: Laura Atwood, Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Chair Kerr, Vice-Chair Kerr, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing a **favorable** testimony in support of HB580, Montgomery County - Voting Methods. I have lived in Montgomery County since 1999, and I have voted in every single election.

I so often find myself frustrated by wanting to vote for a candidate I most like but who (probably) doesn't have a chance of winning. I'm also so frustrated seeing certain votes "split" by multiple candidates, who then have to decide prematurely whether any of them should step back prematurely. I love the enthusiasm in the county, but I remember the year there were over 30 candidates for a county position--our current voting system was so clearly unequipped.

Ranked-choice voting makes so much sense, and it could be feasible, though logistics would have to be worked out. The more localities adopt this, the more likely it is that the system will catch on on a larger scale.

Democracy is in such serious trouble in our country. This wouldn't fix all our problems, by a long shot; but it would be a step toward systems that let voters truly vote their values without feeling disenfranchised.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to issue a **favorable report** on HB580.

Thank you for your time and consideration.