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Government, Labor, and Elections Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
145 Lowe House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

House Bill 580 - Montgomery County - Voting Methods MC 1-26 - FAV

Dear Government, Labor, and Elections Committee Members:

I am asking for your support for HB 580, *Montgomery County - Voting Methods MC 1-26*.

Why HB 580 Matters

- Voters will have confidence that the person elected has the majority of votes, unlike what has been seen in Montgomery County elections in the past.
- Evidence supports that voters will experience a decrease in negative campaigning. Candidates participating in ranked choice voting are likely to remain more civil knowing that as a second choice, they could remain viable.
- Evidence supports that there will be a greater number of candidates and an increase in diversity with ranked choice voting.

HB 580 Has Support of the County

- The Montgomery County House of Delegates voted unanimously, in favor of HB580/MC 1-26
- There is wide support from county leaders, city leaders, community organizations and the residents of Montgomery County.

HB 580 Has No Impact on Current Elections

- HB 580 is enabling legislation. It does not mandate the use of a new voting method.
- HB 580 would go into effect in January 2027.

Within our current voting system, the level of negativity seen in campaigning is destructive to our society as well as expensive. Potential voters are more likely to disengage due to dissatisfaction in the process. Our democracy is ultimately weakened when the winner has less than a majority of the votes. It is time to embrace the option of ranked choice voting in Montgomery County local elections.

I urge the Government, Labor, and Elections Committee to give HB 580 full consideration and a favorable report.