

Dear House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee Members,

In 2026 and beyond, the best way we can prepare for attacks on voting rights and democracy at the federal level is to pass the Maryland Voting Rights Act (MDVRA) [now](#). Recent polling shows that the MDVRA and each of its provisions are extremely popular among Maryland voters across race and party lines. Notably, 81% of Maryland voters [support an MDVRA](#), and 80% would like their state representative to prioritize its passage.

At the national level, we are witnessing attacks, not progress, on voting rights. The Trump Administration's Project 2025 agenda includes eliminating the enforcement of protections against voting discrimination, and congressional leadership is pushing anti-voter legislation that creates additional obstacles in voting and disproportionately impacts Black voters and other voters of color. Meanwhile, increasingly hostile federal courts, including the U.S. Supreme Court, have consistently eroded the protections offered by the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965 over the last several decades.

While Maryland has recently implemented several measures that make voting more equitable, Maryland voters still face barriers to the ballot box and discrimination in voting, such as unfair districts or at-large systems that weaken the voting power of Black voters and other voters of color, inaccessible polling locations, and insufficient language assistance for voters who don't speak English comfortably. Recent vote dilution challenges brought against Baltimore County and Federalsburg demonstrate the persistence of these problems in Maryland.

Altogether, the MDVRA will make Maryland's democracy more inclusive by:

- Expanding language assistance in elections for voters with limited English proficiency.
- Enshrining robust protections against discriminatory vote dilution and voter suppression into state law.
- Creating a central public hub for election data and information to promote transparency.
- Preventing the implementation of discriminatory and unlawful electoral changes before they occur.

The strongest version of this legislation will make this type of litigation less time-intensive and less costly than litigation under the federal VRA—not only for plaintiffs but also for local governments and all parties. More than three-quarters of Maryland voters (77%) [support](#) protections against racial vote dilution. If enacted, this

legislation would immediately position the Free State as a leader in protecting the right to vote.

The MDVRA builds upon successful state VRAs that have already passed in Virginia, California, Washington, Oregon, New York, Connecticut, and Minnesota. Similar bills are also actively under active consideration in New Jersey and Colorado. The MDVRA will carry this momentum forward and provide some of the most robust state-level voting protections in the country.

Now is Maryland's time to lead. I encourage you to prioritize, pass, and fully fund the MDVRA this legislative session.

Sincerely,

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