

Written Testimony in Support of HB0050
Government, Labor, and Elections Committee
Maryland General Assembly
Date: February 01, 2026

To the Members of the Government, Labor, and Elections Committee:

My name is **Liza Smith**. I am an **elected member of the Montgomery County Democratic Central Committee and represent District 14**. I submit this testimony in strong support of **House Bill HB0050** because it goes to the heart of a simple principle shared by labor, voting-rights advocates, and civic organizations alike: people deserve a voice in the decisions that affect their lives.

When a seat in the General Assembly becomes vacant, working families lose representation. Communities lose accountability. Voters lose their voice. Under Maryland's current system, those voices are replaced by appointments made behind closed doors—often for months or even years—without a single vote being cast by the people who live in the district.

HB0050 restores that voice.

This bill does not create chaos or unnecessary expense. It creates fairness. By requiring special elections only when a vacancy occurs early enough in the election cycle—and by holding those elections alongside regular statewide primaries and general elections—HB0050 respects both democratic values and administrative realities.

For working people, representation matters. Labor understands that leadership is legitimate only when it is chosen, not assigned. Just as workers demand a say on the job, voters deserve a say in who speaks for them in Annapolis.

For voting-rights advocates, HB0050 is about access and accountability. It recognizes that democracy does not pause when a seat becomes vacant. It affirms that the right to vote should not depend on timing, convenience, or political calculation.

For civic organizations, this bill strengthens trust. Communities are more engaged—and more willing to participate—when they know their voices matter and their votes count.

Perhaps most importantly, HB0050 places this question directly before the voters through a constitutional amendment. It trusts Marylanders to decide how their democracy should function. That trust is long overdue.

I urge the Government, Labor, and Elections Committee to issue a favorable report on **HB0050** and take a meaningful step toward a more inclusive, transparent, and accountable democracy.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to the people you serve.

Respectfully submitted,

Liza Smith

Montgomery County Democratic Central Committee

District 14