

Testimony on HB 219 – FAVORABLE
House Committee on Government, Labor and Elections
February 11, 2026

Chair Wells and Vice-Chair Kerr, Elections Subcommittee Chair Fair, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Marcia Greenberg, and I live (and vote) in Lexington Park in St Mary's County. I am submitting testimony **in FAVOR OF HB 219**, supporting all efforts to combat intimidation and suppression, and to ensure free and fair elections in Maryland.

As I hope most of you recognize, the current Regime (far beyond being anything resembling a democratic Administration) is ugly, repressive and hell-bent on destroying both our democratic institutions and our multi-cultural society. The American people do NOT approve of the authoritarian tactics, the racist objectives, the destruction of effective governance, and the repressive objectives. We want our country back.

We have but two ways to restore sanity and return to building a more perfect union: through peaceful demonstrations on the streets and by casting our votes. We face an existential moment regarding the future of our country – and it ALL depends on what happens in November at the polls.

Ironically, if there is any group who are aware of this, it is Republican party leadership – nationwide. They know that in a free and fair election, they will lose – and lose badly. Since they are absolutely determined to retain power – and that's what it is all about – they are engaged in finding ways to cheat. They seek ways to intimidate and suppress the vote, to tilt the playing field, and to ensure that they win elections, whether or not that is the actual will of the people.

We have seen what the Republicans are doing in Congress, by trying to pass the SAVE Act. We have seen what they are doing with redistricting, starting in Texas. We have seen one state after another put in place laws that make it harder for people to vote: creating hoops to jump through and impediments to overcome. Since they cannot institute a "poll tax" again, they are finding other ways to make voting more expensive. They are making it harder for people to get to the polls. They are slowing down the postal service, and limiting early voting for hard-working people who lack the flexibility and transportation to vote on election day.

And it is all a farce. We know that there has been very little fraud at the polls in the United States. Ironically, this President and his supporters have proven this in the courts – where their cases have been consistently thrown out because they lack of evidence of fraud.

So why do we need legislation in Maryland, in a blue state? First, we can no longer count on any federal protections. After decades of effective protection through our Federal Voting Rights Act,

the Supreme Court has eviscerated those protections. And the Department of Justice not only refuses to use what remains, but is part of the efforts to intimidate and suppress. Since there is no help from the Federal level, and many of the threats are lead from Washington, state protections are absolutely essential.

Second, it is imperative that we not be complacent in the blue state of Maryland. In case it's not clear for Delegates from Montgomery and Howard and Baltimore county, let me explain or respectfully remind you: While Maryland is a blue state, it has many areas that are DEEP red. Since moving to St Mary's in 2003, I have been asked frequently by old friends and acquaintances: "Where are you living now?" I always respond: In **southern Maryland**. Why? Because our part of Maryland is the south. It is an area with history and legacies of enslaved people. And even as the tobacco buy-out has ended the commercial production of tobacco, the cultural and political ROOTS of tobacco plantations remain. It has been my honor and pleasure to work with many in the African American community in St Mary's – including through the NAACP, the Unified Committee for African-American Contributions, and Historic Sotterley. I have learned about the history of enslavement and racial discrimination in Southern Maryland. I have seen and heard behaviors and comments and attitudes here that range from hateful and ugly to naively insensitive. To be clear: It's not just history; it is present in 2026.

Thankfully, there has been little or no election fraud throughout the United States, and including in Maryland. There is no reason to make it harder for people to vote. Unless, of course, the proponents of tactics want to make it harder for **certain** people to vote, including women and voters of color.

Members of the Committee, please understand that any "SAVE Act" (at the federal or state level) is not only anti-democratic, but it will intimidate and suppress the vote in our state of Maryland. Please understand that it is essential to take proactive measures to combat threats and intimidation, and cynical efforts to suppress the vote.

In St Mary's County, we already contend with a playing field tilted by at-large systems that dilute and suppress the vote – that leads results in our local representation being five, white, Republican men despite greater diversity in our county. To add to that, we now share the horror of seeing the US Congress and the US Supreme Court abandon our Voting Rights Act. Protection must now be assured at the state level. We need you to put into place legal mechanisms by which to ensure free and fair elections. We need you to use your power to ensure that there are no opportunities to introduce intimidation and suppression in Maryland. Please report out HB 219 favorably – for the sake of all voters across the state of Maryland.