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Richard Keith Kaplowitz
Frederick, MD 21703

TESTIMONY ON HB#/0219- POSITION: FAVORABLE

Maryland Voting Rights Act of 2026 - Voter Intimidation and Suppression

TO: Chair Wells, Vice Chair Kerr, and members of the Government, Labor and Elections Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#/0219, **Maryland Voting Rights Act of 2026 - Voter Intimidation and Suppression**

This bill is a recognition of the threats our elections and voting are facing. The Atlantic Magazine reported *Trump's New Threats to American Elections - The reasons to worry about election integrity are becoming more urgent.*¹ (Updated 10:00 a.m. on February 4, 2026)

With nine months to go until the midterm elections, President Trump's campaign to subvert them is escalating. His administration has recently taken a series of steps that have election officials, observers, and administrators deeply and rightfully concerned about the prospects for improper interference with the election process.

Maryland must respond to this intolerable situation by passing this bill. It will alter public notice requirements of the State Board of Elections, local boards of elections, and certain municipal corporations with respect to changes in administrative policy affecting voting rights; prohibiting acts of intimidation, deception, or obstruction that interfere with the right to vote; prohibiting local governments from taking any action related to the election process that results in a disparity between members of a protected class and other members of the electorate; etc.

This bill will allow the state to prevent DHS and ICE from interference with our elections by intimidation and unconstitutional actions. It is absolutely required at this time.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB#/0219.

¹ <https://www.theatlantic.com/newsletters/2026/02/trump-threats-american-elections/685873/>