



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

DAWN LUEDTKE
COUNCILMEMBER
DISTRICT 7

February 16, 2026

The Honorable Melissa Wells
Chair, Government, Labor & Elections Committee
145 Lowe House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: House Bill 580, *Montgomery County - Voting Methods MC 1-26*.

Dear Chair Wells,

I write to urge your favorable support for HB 580, Montgomery County - Voting Methods MC 1-26, an enabling bill that will allow Montgomery County to take the next steps to implement ranked choice voting.

HB580 is strongly supported by members of the County Council, municipal governments, and community leaders. While passage of this bill would not impact the current 2026 Gubernatorial election cycle, it will help us to discuss implementation via local law for future elections.

Over the last three Gubernatorial election cycles, the Democratic Primary races for County Executive have been won by less than a majority of the vote. In crowded electoral fields, ranked choice voting would allow voters to be clear about preferences and based on the tabulation, result in a majority winning candidate. It also helps us to avoid run-off voting, and reduce challenges and recount requests like we saw in the 2018 and 2022 County Executive primary races for Montgomery County.

I recognize that should Montgomery County proceed with implementing ranked choice voting if HB580 is successful, it will require commitment and dedication to voter education and outreach to ensure our voters understand the change and the impact it will have in uplifting their voices. Montgomery County is committed to providing significant voter education and outreach should we proceed with local implementation.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report on House Bill 580.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Very truly yours,

Dawn Luedtke
Montgomery County Councilmember, District 7