

Dear Government, Labor, and Elections Committee:

I strongly support this bill and am urging all of you to do the same. The Trump administration has been trying a number of tactics to make it harder for some groups of American citizens to vote and for those votes to be counted. People of color are especially vulnerable to Trump's voter suppression efforts. In Maryland, we need to take every step possible to make sure that the election process is free, safe, and fair for **all** eligible voters in our state. This bill, HB0219: Maryland Voting Rights Act of 2026 - Voter Intimidation and Suppression, will do just that. It prohibits changes to voting requirements without sufficient notice. It ensures that citizens who belong to racial or language minority groups can vote just as easily as other citizens. Crucially, it prohibits intimidating, deceiving, or otherwise blocking any eligible voter from casting their ballot. And, if those rights are violated, it provides ways for the circuit court and state attorney general to help rectify the situation.

Although I strongly support this bill, I do have questions about the wording in one place. Section 1-105(a) states the following:

“During the period beginning 21 days before the first day of early voting through election day, the state board, a local board, or a municipal corporation that administers its own elections may consider a change in administrative policy affecting voting rights at a meeting if the state board, local board, or municipal corporation provides reasonable public notice of the change at least 48 hours before the scheduled meeting time.”

If a change is made on meeting that is held on election day, it seems that voters would not have enough time to become aware of the change before going to the polls. Should “election day” be changed to “21 days before election day”? Also, it says that there should be “reasonable public notice of the change at least 48 hours before the scheduled meeting time,” but how can the change be published if the meeting to decide on the change has not occurred yet?

If the wording in this section needs to be changed, please issue an appropriate amendment.

Overall, though, this bill contains strong measures to protect the voting rights of **all** eligible citizens in our state and ensures that legal action can be taken if those rights are violated. A lot is at stake in the upcoming midterm elections, and we need to ensure that every eligible voter can participate. Please support HB0219—our democracy could very well depend on it.

Sincerely,

Shilpa Shenvi  
Maryland voter

