

HB1356\_RichardKaplowitz\_FAV  
03/05/2026  
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Frederick, MD 21703-7134

**TESTIMONY ON HB#1356 - POSITION: FAVORABLE**  
**Labor and Employment - Civic and Related Activities - Protection (Maryland Employee Civic Activity and Lawful Expression Protection Act)**

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

**FROM:** Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#/1356, **Labor and Employment - Civic and Related Activities - Protection (Maryland Employee Civic Activity and Lawful Expression Protection Act)**

In early 2025 and 2026, the Trump administration took steps to reverse Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) protections, focusing on eliminating "disparate impact" liability, rescinding workplace harassment guidance, and targeting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives. These actions included revoking long-standing executive orders (EO 11246) for federal contractors and narrowing federal definitions of sex discrimination, aiming to shift focus from systemic discrimination toward "merit-based" policies.<sup>1</sup>

This bill is Maryland's answer to re-establishment of protections and strengthening them in Maryland for employer-employee relations.

This bill authorizes an employer to require an applicant to disclose the applicant's engagement in certain actions only if the disclosure is related to certain job requirements; prohibits an employer from taking certain adverse action against an employee if the employee engages in certain activity; and provides that adverse action taken against an employee within 120 days after the employee engages in activity protected under the Act creates a rebuttable presumption of retaliation.

This is a labor and worker rights protection legislation.

**I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB1356.**

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<sup>1</sup> Google AI Search "rollback of EEOC protections on protected activities by trump"