

Witness: Katherine Strauch Sullivan

Jurisdiction: Baltimore County

Bill: HB 2100 – Election Districts – General Assembly and Representatives in Congress

Position: UNFAVORABLE / AGAINST HB 2100

Written Testimony of Katherine Strauch Sullivan

My name is Kate Sullivan. I am a Baltimore County resident and Director of Secure the Vote MD, a Maryland election watchdog organization. I respectfully submit this testimony in strong opposition to HB 2100.

At a time when public confidence in our elections is already dangerously low, Maryland should be doing everything possible to strengthen public trust in the electoral process. HB 2100 does precisely the opposite.

HB 2100 is an unnecessary mid-decade attempt to rewrite Maryland's redistricting rules for partisan advantage. Congressional districts are traditionally redrawn every ten years following the census, and Maryland completed that process after the 2020 Census.

In 2022, Senior Judge Lynne Battaglia struck down Maryland's original map, finding that partisan considerations had overtaken traditional redistricting principles such as compactness and respect for political boundaries. Maryland then adopted the replacement map currently in place.

There is no new census or demographic necessity requiring another map. What has changed is the political environment.

Instead of respecting those guardrails and allowing the current map to remain in place until the normal redistricting process following the 2030 Census, HB 2100 seeks to change the constitutional framework itself.

That should concern every Maryland voter, regardless of political affiliation.

If constitutional protections stand in the way of a political objective, the answer should not be to weaken those protections. The answer should be to respect them.

The proposed map itself only reinforces these concerns. ***District boundaries should reflect communities and meaningful geographic considerations—not be stretched, pulled, and manipulated to engineer a predetermined partisan outcome.*** Marylanders can recognize political gerrymandering when they see it, and pretending otherwise only further damages confidence in the institutions responsible for administering our elections.

This is not merely a dispute over lines on a map. It is a question of whether voters choose their representatives or politicians choose their voters.

The timing is equally troubling.

Maryland faces significant economic and fiscal challenges. In 2025, Moody's lowered Maryland's credit rating from Aaa to Aa1—the first such Moody's downgrade in decades—citing economic and fiscal concerns including Maryland's vulnerability to changes in federal employment and policy and its elevated fixed costs.

Maryland families are also confronting affordability concerns, rising energy costs, taxes and fees, and uncertainty about the state's economic future.

Those are the issues demanding the General Assembly's attention. Marylanders deserve better priorities.

Maryland is struggling with serious challenges that directly affect the daily lives of its residents. Our elected officials should be focused on creating a state where families and businesses can afford to stay, grow, and prosper—not engaging in another partisan redistricting fight.

Marylanders expect their government to solve problems, not manufacture political advantages.

Election integrity is about more than counting ballots correctly. It is also about creating an electoral system voters believe is fair.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to issue an **unfavorable report on HB 2100**.

Katherine Strauch Sullivan
Baltimore County