



**TESTIMONY FOR
HB0050 – General Assembly – Special Election to Fill a Vacancy in Office**

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Foley

Committee: Government, Labor, and Elections

Organization Submitting: IndivisibleHoCoMD

Person Submitting: Marijane Monck, Co-Facilitator Defend Democracy Action Team

Position: FAVORABLE

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I submit this testimony in favor of HB0050 on behalf of Indivisible Howard County. Indivisible Howard County is a 1500+ member organization comprising numerous action teams. We believe in fairness, tolerance, inclusion, and democracy. The Defend Democracy Team works on issues involving election integrity, campaign finance, and ethics in government.

HB0050 strengthens representative democracy by ensuring legislative vacancies are addressed through a transparent, timely, and voter-centered process. Currently, vacancies are filled by party central committees, limiting constituents' direct voice. At a time of fragile public trust, Marylanders deserve greater participation in choosing their representatives.

This bill allows voters to elect a permanent replacement at the next regular statewide election when a vacancy occurs early enough in the term, while preserving temporary appointments when necessary. By aligning with existing election timelines, it ensures efficiency and avoids unnecessary costs.

HB0050 is a commonsense reform that enhances accountability, responsiveness, and public confidence in government.

We respectfully urge a FAVORABLE report.