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District 14

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 219, Maryland Voting Rights Act of 2026 – Voter  
Intimidation and Suppression

February 11, 2026, 2:00 p.m.

TO: Members of the House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee  
FROM: Farnaz Edwards

Chair and Members of the Government, Labor, and Elections Committee:

My name is Farnaz Edwards, I live in Brookeville, Maryland, and I am writing in support of HB 219, Maryland Voting Rights Act of 2026. This important bill strengthens protections for the fundamental right to vote by addressing both voter intimidation and suppression.

HB 219 enhances transparency in election administration by requiring clear and advanced public notice of changes to administrative policies that affect voting rights, helping ensure that all voters are informed and able to participate fully in the democratic process.

Crucially, HB 219 prohibits acts of intimidation, deception, or obstruction that interfere with an individual's right to vote—safeguarding voters from conduct that can deter or prevent participation in elections.

The bill also prohibits election-related actions by local governments that would result in disparities in access to voting or voter participation between members of protected classes and other voters. These provisions are essential to protect equal access and to uphold the principle that all eligible Marylanders should have equitable opportunities to cast their ballots without discrimination or undue barriers.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to **support HB 219** so that all Maryland voters may be assured of fair, accessible, and secure elections.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,  
Farnaz Edwards