

The Honorable Vanessa Atterbeary

Chair, Ways and Means Committee

Low House Office Building, Room 131

6 Bladen Street

Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Support for HB 0145, Election Law, Election Misinformation, Election Disinformation, and Deepfakes

Dear Chair Atterbeary,

Maryland Latinos Unidos strongly supports House Bill 0145, Election Law, Election Misinformation, Election Disinformation, and Deepfakes. HB 0145 is before the House Ways and Means Committee during the 2026 Legislative Session and addresses a growing threat to democratic participation.

HB 0145 establishes safeguards against the creation and dissemination of materially deceptive election related media, including digitally manipulated content designed to mislead voters. The bill responds to the rapid expansion of artificial intelligence and deepfake technology that can distort political discourse and undermine public trust.

Latino and immigrant communities are uniquely vulnerable to election misinformation. Research consistently shows that non English speaking voters and communities with limited access to trusted local information are more likely to be targeted by false or misleading content. Election misinformation often exploits language gaps, cultural context, and social media platforms to suppress turnout or confuse voters about their rights and obligations.

By setting clear standards and accountability mechanisms, HB 0145 helps protect voters from manipulation while preserving legitimate political speech. Ensuring that voters receive accurate information is foundational to a functioning democracy, particularly for communities that have historically been excluded from civic power.

The implications for Latino and immigrant Marylanders are profound. Accurate election information supports informed participation, reduces fear and confusion, and strengthens confidence in democratic institutions. MLU can amplify the impact of HB 0145 through voter education, multilingual outreach, and partnerships that promote media literacy and civic resilience.

Maryland Latinos Unidos urges a favorable report on HB 0145. Protecting the integrity of elections is inseparable from protecting the right of every community to participate fully and fairly in the democratic process.

Sincerely,

Carlos Orbe, Jr.

Communications and Public Affairs Specialist

Maryland Latinos Unidos

corbejr@mdlatinosunidos.org