

# From the Desk of Congressman David Trone

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March 5, 2026

The Honorable Melissa Wells  
Government, Labor, and Elections Committee  
142 Lowe House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Kenneth Kerr  
Government, Labor, and Elections Committee  
142 Lowe House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chair Wells, Vice Chair Kerr, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to share my strong support for *House Bill 1356 - Maryland Employee Civic Activity and Lawful Expression Protection Act*, which would protect employees from retaliation for engaging in political or civic activities on their own time.

When I started my business, I wanted a team made up of people from different races, religions, backgrounds, and experiences, because I know that a workforce that reflects the richness of our communities is stronger, more creative, and more resilient. I've seen firsthand how giving people the freedom to bring their full selves—their ideas, their passions, and their values—into their work benefits everyone.

That same principle extends to civic life. Our own Bill of Rights guarantees freedoms like speech, assembly, and the right to petition our government. These rights are not abstract; they are meant to protect every citizen's ability to engage in our democracy. No one should fear losing their job for voting, volunteering, or expressing their beliefs on their own time. *House Bill 1356* ensures that employees can exercise these fundamental rights without intimidation or retaliation.

Protecting these rights strengthens not only our workplaces but our communities. When people feel safe to participate in civic life, we all benefit—from more vibrant civic engagement to workplaces where employees feel valued and empowered.

Maryland has always led on protecting workers and promoting civic engagement. Passing *House Bill 1356* would reaffirm those values and give every Marylander the confidence that they can contribute to our democracy freely. I urge you to support this important legislation.

Respectfully,



David Trone  
Former Member of Congress