



## TESTIMONY FOR HB0580 MONTGOMERY COUNTY – VOTING METHODS MC 1-26

**Bill Sponsor:** Montgomery County

**Committee:** Government, Labor, and Elections

**Organization Submitting:** Maryland Legislative Coalition

**Person Submitting:** Cecilia Plante, co-chair

**Position:** FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0580 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Our members applaud the Montgomery County Council for their attempts to ensure that elected officials truly represent the views of the residents of the county. They have already allowed for a system of small dollar campaign contributions that ensures that more candidates will be able to run and have worked hard to ensure that as many voters as possible can vote easily and safely.

This is yet another innovation. It comes in the form of enabling legislation that will allow Montgomery County to adopt a ranked choice voting system or an approval voting system. In a ranked choice system, voters will rank their choices from highest to lowest. In an approval system, voters will simply vote for all the candidates they support and the one with the most votes wins.

This legislation does not specify the details of the system that Montgomery County can pick, only that they can choose a different system. The system would apply to elections for –

- County Executive
- Member of the County Council
- Judge of the Circuit Court
- State's Attorney
- Register of Wills
- Sheriff
- Member of the Board of Education

Our members support this enabling legislation and look forward to seeing the results of any new voting system selected by Montgomery County.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.