

TESTIMONY FOR HB0219

Maryland Voting Rights Act of 2026 - Voter Intimidation and Suppression

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Smith

Committee: Government, Labor, and Elections

Organization Submitting: Indivisible Bowie and Beyond (IBBMD)

Person Submitting: Liz Enagonio, co-founder

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0219 on behalf of Indivisible Bowie and Beyond (IBBMD). IBBMD is a group of several hundred grassroots activists in Bowie and surrounding areas in Prince George's County, working to bring justice, equality, and people-centric legislation to Maryland. HB0219 supports the mission of IBBMD to expand democratic participation, promote government transparency, and ensure that every Marylander has a meaningful voice in their government.

IBBMD strongly urges the Committee to pass HB0219 to enact protections against voter intimidation and suppression in Maryland. HB0219 is an emergency bill that strengthens Maryland's commitment to protecting the fundamental right to vote. It prohibits acts of intimidation, deception, or obstruction that interfere with a person's ability to cast a ballot. The bill also prevents local governments from adopting or enforcing any election-related policy that results in disparities between members of a protected class and other voters.

At this time in America, these protections are fundamentally necessary. Voter intimidation and misinformation have become increasingly prevalent and sophisticated. Even less-obvious forms of obstruction can discourage participation, especially among communities that have historically faced barriers to the ballot box. HB0219 ensures that

Maryland has clear, enforceable standards to ensure full access to the ballot and to hold accountable those who attempt to undermine the voting process. By prohibiting intimidation and deceptive practices, HB0219 strengthens the integrity of our elections and protects the rights of voters who are most vulnerable to suppression. It reinforces the values of equity and civic empowerment, and helps build a healthier, more inclusive democracy for all Marylanders. IBBMD urges that you support HB0219