

Testimony on HB 462

Government, Labor and Elections Committee

Elections - In-Person Voting - Proof of Identity

Position: Unfavorable

My name is Julia Nichols, and as a citizen of St. Mary's County, I strongly urge the Committee to NOT to pass HB 462.

Proof of Identity laws are designed to create more hurdles and make it more difficult for people to vote. It is voter suppression. There is little to no evidence that there is fraudulent voting happening, and it certainly is not happening at levels that are changing the outcome of elections. It is unreasonable to request people bring multiple proofs of identity and residence when they vote in person (and how would this work for voting by mail, anyway?).

Federal courts, including the U.S. Supreme Court, have severely limited the federal Voting Rights Act's protections through cases like *Shelby County v. Holder* (2013), which gutted the coverage formula in the preclearance program, and *Brnovich v. DNC* (2021), which made it difficult—if not impossible—to challenge discriminatory voter suppression. **It is imperative that we protect the voting rights of Marylanders.**

Meanwhile, the federal government is not only failing to protect against intimidation and discrimination in our voting processes but is actively advancing anti-voter policies. At a time when federal voting rights protections have been weakened and enforcement has become increasingly uncertain, **Maryland legislators have both the authority and the responsibility to safeguard fair and equal access to the ballot.**

I strongly and respectfully urge an **unfavorable** vote on HB 462.