

Testimony HB0496/MD

Bill Number and Name: Testimony HB0496/MD Election Law – Unaffiliated Voters – Open Primary Elections

Position: Support for HB0496

Committee Name: Government, Labor, and Elections

Dr. William “Randy” Everett DIA

1205 Hidden Stream Court

Abingdon, Maryland 21009

Cell: 443-910-0593

Email: everettbn@gmail.com

Testimony:

Chair Wells, Vice Chair Kerr, and members of the Government, Labor and Elections committee, my name is Dr. William Everett, retired Colonel, OIF combat veteran, teacher at Loyola University, Harford County resident, husband, father, grandfather and a proud home-grown Marylander.

250 years ago, this coming August at the Battle of Brooklyn, 400 Maryland Patriots sacrificed their lives and their futures to save the American Continental Army securing the title of “Old Line State” for Maryland.

Today we enjoy the liberties provided by all Veterans, both then and now. The most significant product of our sacrifice - is the right to vote.

According to a 2009 Gallup poll, 33% of veterans are registered as “independent”. More recent Gallup data suggests the number has risen to possibility 45% with the influx of Iraqi and Afghanistan veterans.

As of December 2025, the Maryland State Board of Elections indicates that just over one million (1,056,166) Marylanders or 25% of the electorate are unaffiliated with a major party and therefore ineligible to vote in the taxpayer funded primaries.

That means taxpayers like me fund the primary elections, yet a QUARTER of the eligible Maryland voters are denied access. Many of which are veterans. This IS taxation without representation.

I earned the right to vote both in the primary and general election, through my thirty-three years in uniform, my giving back to the community as a teacher, the taxes I pay, the Maryland family that I raised and the dedication that I have shown to my State.

I adamantly urge you to pass HB0496 and honor the memories the Maryland 400 and every Veteran and Citizen of our Great "Old Line" State - Maryland.