



LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS OF MARYLAND, INC.

The Maryland House of Delegates, 6 Bladen Street, Room 300, Annapolis, Maryland 21401
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Delegate Melissa Wells
Government, Labor, and Elections Committee
145 Lowe House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chair Wells and Members of the Committee,

The Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland offers its strong and favorable support for Senate Bill 255 - Voting Rights Act of 2026 - Counties and Municipal Corporations. The bill prevents counties and municipal corporations from using discriminatory electoral systems that hamper individuals in protected classes from fairly electing candidates of their choice. Senate Bill 255 is essential as it protects minority voters by prohibiting election practices that reduce their voting power and influence in the electoral results. **This bill is a 2026 legislative priority for the Black Caucus.**

The Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland believes that SB 255 will help eliminate unjust electoral systems that disproportionately impact minority communities. It is critical within our communities to prevent polarized voting in local elections to ensure fair participation and representation. SB 255 would broaden the goal of preventing voter discrimination and the safeguarding of voters rights. This goal is extremely important as there have been multiple documented instances of voter discrimination in our elections. Federal court found that Baltimore County conducted a racially discriminatory redistricting map that forced the county to create a map that complied with the federal Voting Rights Act. Senate Bill 255 empowers protected classes to exercise their voter power and create influential change within election outcomes.

Additionally, SB 255 supports minorities regaining their voice through equal participation and fair representation, which has been an issue in recent years. In Wicomico County, there was a lawsuit that alleged an at-large voting system denied Black voters equal participation in the political process by creating a more equitable map and system, Senate Bill 255 directly acknowledges there have been practices that negatively impacted minority communities and distorted election outcomes. The bill promotes integrity, accessibility, and updating electoral protocols for effective representation of minority communities. The passage of this bill will strengthen the trust in the electoral process and reaffirm the faith in Black Marylanders that the system represents them fairly.

For these reasons, the Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland strongly supports Senate Bill 255.

Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland