

Testimony on Senate Bill – Favorable

HB 0488 – Election Districts - General Assembly and Representatives in Congress

Rules and Executive Nominations Committee

January 27, 2026

Dear Honorable Chair Healey, Vice Chair Holmes, and Members of the Committee,

My name is **Katherine Vaughn**, and I am a resident of **Catonsville, Maryland**. I am writing in support of **HB 0488 – Election Districts - General Assembly and Representatives in Congress**.

I support **HB 0488** because across the country, Republican-led states are aggressively redrawing congressional maps to entrench power and silence voters before they can be held accountable. Texas, Florida, Missouri, Ohio, and North Carolina have already moved forward. Florida alone is pursuing changes that could hand Republicans multiple additional seats in Congress. Nationally, Republicans could gain up to 19 seats if states like Maryland fail to respond. Maryland is at a critical moment and needs to focus on moving forward with the new map immediately and legislatively.

The selected map incorporates public feedback presented by advocates over the course of months through the GRAC process, and it pays thoughtful attention to Maryland's communities. This map strengthens community representation, particularly for water-based communities, Baltimore City, the Capital Region, and fast-growing economic corridors.

We must move forward with congressional maps for 2026, 2028 and 2030 together, now. Voters deserve stability and clarity for the rest of the decade, not repeated fights and shifting rules every election cycle. We should know what our districts look like for more than two years.

Maryland cannot hesitate. We cannot hide behind process debates or procedural caution. At moments like this, delay is surrender. The Commission has done its work, and now the General Assembly must decide whether it will follow the voters or ignore them. Punting this decision to a muddled ballot measure process will only create confusion for voters and delay urgently needed action and create uncertainty for upcoming elections.

Marylanders understand what is happening nationally, and they expect their elected officials to respond with urgency and resolve. Maryland waiting does not slow national gerrymandering, and it may result in us missing the chance to defend our voice.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to issue a **favorable report** on **HB 0488**.

Thank you for your time and consideration.