

**TESTIMONY OF REBECCA HAMILTON WILLIAMS
BEFORE THE HOUSE RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE
IN FAVOR TO HOUSE BILL 0482
January 26, 2026**

Chair Heely, Vice-Chair Holmes Jr., and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **support of House Bill 0482**.

HB 0482 would establish a **Legislative and Congressional Redistricting and Apportionment Commission** as an independent unit of State government responsible for drawing Maryland’s legislative and congressional districts subject to clearly defined standards and procedures.

1. Promotes Fairness and Transparency

The integrity of our democratic system depends on the public’s confidence that electoral districts are drawn fairly, not to advantage any party or incumbent. An independent redistricting commission — with statutory standards and neutral criteria — will help ensure that maps reflect communities of interest, preserve competitive elections, and uphold the principle of “one person, one vote.” This transparency is vital for strengthening trust between voters and their government.

2. Reduces Partisan Influence in Mapmaking

By moving the redistricting process into an independent commission, HB 0482 reduces the risk of maps being shaped predominantly by political interests. When district boundaries are determined through a process that includes diverse perspectives and objective guidelines, the resulting maps are more likely to withstand scrutiny and serve all Marylanders equitably.

3. Encourages Public Engagement

An independent commission model can create structured opportunities for meaningful public input. Maryland voters deserve a process where their voices are heard and considered before final decisions are made. HB 0482 provides a framework for public hearings and comment that can make the process more participatory and accountable.

4. Strengthens Map Durability and Legal Certainty

Independent, clearly defined redistricting procedures help produce maps that are more defensible and less susceptible to legal challenges. By establishing transparent standards and a predictable process, this bill can reduce uncertainty and litigation, ultimately saving legislative time and public resources.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to issue a **favorable report on HB 0482**. Enacting this bill would be a meaningful step toward more equitable representation and a more robust democratic process in Maryland.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Hamilton Williams
Elkton, MD (Cecil County)