



**Bill: HB488 (UNFAVORABLE)**

Submitted as a Pastor – Biblical & Moral Objection

Position: **UNFAVORABLE**

Written Testimony: **Pastor Paul J Arcand II, Lighthouse Baptist Church, Severna Park Maryland**

I respectfully submit this testimony in opposition to **HB488**.

I speak not as a politician, lobbyist, or party operative, but as a pastor who has served Maryland families for decades. My concern is not merely political, **it is moral**.

The strength of any republic rises or falls on the integrity of its processes. When laws are crafted in ways that intentionally diminish the voice of certain citizens, trust in government erodes, civic participation declines, and the social fabric frays. Scripture speaks clearly to this principle.

**Proverbs 11:1 “A false balance is abomination to the LORD: but a just weight is his delight.”**

Government, like commerce, must operate with honest measures. When lines are drawn or systems are altered to predetermine outcomes rather than reflect the will of the people, the issue is no longer policy, **it is justice**.

The Bible repeatedly condemns the misuse of power for advantage: **Isaiah 10:1–2 “Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed; To turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people...”**

Regardless of party, disenfranchisement is wrong. The right to representation is foundational, not optional. When legislative authority is used to entrench power rather than serve the governed, it violates the trust placed in elected officials. **2 Samuel 23:3 “He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.”**

As a pastor, I regularly encourage civic engagement, respect for authority, and peaceful participation in the democratic process. Bills like **HB488** make that task more difficult by fostering cynicism and the belief that outcomes are engineered rather than earned.

This is not a call for partisan advantage. It is a plea for fairness, transparency, and restraint. A system perceived as unjust will not long remain stable.

For these reasons; **moral, civic, and constitutional**, I respectfully urge the committee to give **HB488** an **UNFAVORABLE** report.

Respectfully submitted,

**Pastor Paul J. Arcand II**

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