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Richard Keith Kaplowitz

Frederick, MD 21703

**TESTIMONY ON HB#/0488 – FAVORABLE**

**Election Districts - General Assembly and Representatives in Congress**

**TO:** Chair Healey, Vice Chair Holmes, Jr. and members of the Rules and Executive Nominations Committee

**FROM:** Richard Keith Kaplowitz

**My name is Richard K. Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#0488, Election Districts - General Assembly and Representatives in Congress**

This bill attempts to put the skewed elections created by Donald Trump through Republican states redistricting for political gain to now facing a counter by Democratic states responding in kind.

As reviewed by the Harvard Kennedy School <sup>1</sup>

In June, President Trump floated the idea of a mid-decade redistricting in Texas. The governor of Texas, Greg Abbott, has called a special session in Texas where they are redrawing the congressional district maps. The very plainly stated goal is to try to add five Republican congressional seats that will be won in the 2026 congressional election. The thinking is that the midterm election nationwide is going to be very competitive. For Republicans to hold onto a majority in the House of Representatives, every seat they can win will be valuable. And, so, adding five seats in Texas may prove to be the margin of victory to maintain a majority in the House.

Maryland is reacting to Texas and the Republicans redistricting for partisan gain by doing the same here for the same reasons. The Supreme Court upheld the Texas plot so the impetus for Maryland is there.

Personally, I favor letting people pick the politicians rather than them picking us. Let's take Republicans/Independents word on this and push for automatic voter registration on an opt out instead of an opt in system. Push forward on mail out ballots to every registered voter and make it easy to drop it off in ballot boxes or at polling places. Include a link to nonpartisan voter guides for primary and general elections. **MAKE IT SO EVERY VOTER HAS A VOICE AND CAN BE HEARD.** Then, every politician must appeal to all voters and add ranked choice voting to moderate how politicos appeal to the voters.

The 2026 election has become a political football because the Republican's tackling of our democracy demands that Maryland push back and intercept the ball.

**I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report and pass HB0488.**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.hks.harvard.edu/faculty-research/policy-topics/politics/explainer-understanding-mid-decade-redistricting-push-texas>