

Dear committee members,

I strongly oppose the bill of HB 0488. The reasons are as followed.

1. Destroys Fair Representation

HB 0488 paves the way to dismantle Maryland's only Republican congressional district, silencing hundreds of thousands of voters.

A democracy requires competitive elections and ideological diversity, not single-party domination.

2. Extreme Partisan Gerrymandering

Maryland is already one of the most gerrymandered states in the nation.

This bill intentionally redraws congressional lines to entrench one party's power, rather than reflect communities or voter intent.

3. Weaponizes the Judiciary

By granting original jurisdiction to the Supreme Court of Maryland over congressional redistricting, the bill:

Politicizes the judiciary

Bypasses normal judicial review

Undermines public confidence in court neutrality

Courts should check political power, not be conscripted into enforcing it.

4. Overrides Voter Choice

Voters in MD-1 consistently elect a representative aligned with their values.

HB 0488 overrules the will of those voters by reengineering district lines to predetermine outcomes.

5. Violates the Spirit of the U.S. Constitution

While states may draw congressional districts, the Constitution demands equal protection and fair representation.

This bill is designed not for population balance, but for political punishment of disfavored voters.

6. Creates One-Party Rule

Eliminating the only Republican district effectively converts Maryland's congressional delegation into a single-party monopoly, reducing debate, accountability, and oversight.

7. Sets a Dangerous National Precedent

If Maryland openly uses redistricting to erase minority political representation, it invites retaliation by other states—accelerating a national redistricting arms race that harms democracy everywhere.

8. Disregards Communities of Interest

HB 0488 prioritizes political outcomes over:

Geographic continuity

Economic ties

Cultural and regional identities

Communities are split and diluted to achieve partisan goals.

9. Erodes Public Trust

Marylanders across the political spectrum increasingly distrust government.

A bill perceived as a power grab will deepen cynicism and disengagement among voters.

10. Redistricting Should Follow the Census, Not Politics

The bill redraws congressional districts outside the normal post-census process, for elections starting in 2026—signaling that political advantage, not demographic necessity, is the real motive.

Bottom Line

HB 0488 is not about fairness or modernization.

It is about eliminating political opposition, consolidating power, and denying voters meaningful choice.

Maryland deserves competitive elections—not legislated outcomes.

Sincerely,

Wei Yan