

## **Testimony Opposing HB 488 and the Proposed Congressional Redistricting Plan**

Chair, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I am here today to express strong opposition to HB 488 and the redistricting proposal advanced by Governor Wes Moore.

This proposal represents a clear overreach of executive and legislative power. Many Marylanders view it as an intentional attempt to gerrymander the congressional map for partisan gain—specifically, to eliminate Maryland’s only Republican member of Congress, Representative Andy Harris. Regardless of party affiliation, the deliberate targeting of a sitting member of Congress through manipulated district lines undermines the integrity of our democratic process.

Republicans and independents in Maryland are already significantly underrepresented due to previous redistricting cycles that heavily favored one political party. HB 488 would deepen that imbalance. Rather than ensuring fair representation, this bill further suppresses the voices of Republican and independent voters, effectively diluting their ability to elect candidates who reflect their views.

There has been **no new census** to justify a full redrawing of congressional districts. Redistricting outside of the constitutionally grounded census process should only occur when absolutely necessary and supported by clear demographic evidence. HB 488 does not account for the substantial number of residents who have left Maryland in recent years, nor does it reflect stable, verified population data. Redrawing districts without accurate population information risks creating maps that are neither representative nor legally sound.

The goal of any redistricting effort should be simple: **fair, balanced, and contiguous districts** that reflect communities—not partisan interests. Districts should be drawn to keep communities intact, ensure competitive elections, and protect the principle that voters choose their representatives, not the other way around. HB 488 fails to meet these standards.

Additionally, candidates for Congress have already been campaigning for more than a year under the existing district boundaries. Implementing a new map in the middle of an election cycle—just five months before the primary—creates chaos, uncertainty, and potential disenfranchisement. Some candidates may find themselves drawn out of their districts or rendered ineligible after investing significant time, resources, and community engagement. This is fundamentally unfair and erodes public trust in the electoral process.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to reject HB 488. Maryland deserves a redistricting process that prioritizes fairness, transparency, and stability—not partisan advantage.

Thank you for your consideration.