

Testimony on House Bill – Favorable

HB 488 – CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT - Election Districts – General Assembly and Representatives in Congress

Rules and Executive Nominations Committee

January 26, 2026

Dear Honorable Chair Healey, Vice Chair Holmes, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Mary Elizabeth Kaiser, and I am a resident of Clarksville in Howard County. I am writing in support of **HB 488 – CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT - Election Districts – General Assembly and Representatives in Congress.**

I have been horrified by the actions of the current Federal Government Administration under the Donald J Trump Presidency and the unwillingness of the Republican Congress to uphold the law in the face of unlawful actions by the president and his cabinet. This includes:

1. The failure of congress to retain the congressional power of the purse in practice.
2. The levy of tariffs, a power that belongs to congress – not the president. The chaotic levy of tariffs appears to be a measure of extortion on foreign countries that is guided by President Trump's instantaneous target of resentment. The financial burden of these tariffs is borne by the United States citizens and immigrants.
3. The dismissal of fact base science and health care measures. Our country is NOT healthier or safer with the dismissal of top impartial civil servants at NIH, NOAA, the CDC and other agencies.
4. The missile strikes on Venezuelan fishing boats – killing all those on board, even when they clearly posed no threat, followed by the invasion of Venezuela and the kidnapping of its President, Nicolas Maduro, and his wife.
5. Immigration enforcement (ICE) events of the past year. The initial atrocities of mistakenly detaining Kilmar Abrego Garcia, deporting him to the infamous CECOT prison, and then refusing to release him despite court orders to do so.
6. Permitting ICE raids followed by illegal deportations of legal immigrants to CECOT, an El Salvadoran prison notorious for its torture practices
7. The ambush of law abiding immigrants as they appear for their immigration court hearings. The escalation of events in Chicago where agents rappelled from a helicopter in the dark of night to raid an apartment complex, knocked down doors and hurled flash-bang grenades, zip-tied and held residents outside in the cold including U.S. citizens.
8. Now, over the past two weeks, we have **the murder of Renee Good**, a law abiding US citizen who was **unjustifiably shot in the head by ICE agents**. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) under the directorship of Kristi Noem claims that the ICE officer was acting in self defense. This is clearly contradicted by numerous eyewitness videos. Congress took no action.

9. Yesterday we have **the murder of Alex Pretti**, a nurse trying to help a woman shoved down by ICE agents was **murdered by Customs and Border Control Agents. He was shot 10 times, execution style, again DHS claims the action was justified in clear contradiction to numerous video eyewitness accounts and testimony.**
10. And then there is the threat to invade another sovereign nation, Greenland, for the purpose of acquiring its territory and resources, not because it is a threat to our national security.

If the current Republican Congress is unwilling to protect the American people, is unwilling to save our democracy and is cowed by a president who does NOT have a mandate from the United States citizens, and who does act illegally and sanctions murder, then we have an obligation to act. That Action is to empower congress to do its job by electing representatives who will act in the interests of their constituents, the American People – not Donald Trump.

I call on the State of Maryland to protect its citizens and to put forth a CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT for congressional redistricting to be submitted to the qualified voters of the State of Maryland at the next general election to be held in November 2026 for adoption or rejection in accordance with Article XIV of the Maryland Constitution.

For the above list of (abridged) reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to issue a **favorable report** on **HB 488**.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mary Elizabeth Kaiser