

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION of HB0488
Rules and Executive Nominations Committee Session, January 27, 2026

January 25, 2026

Chair Healey, House Rules Committee, and Fellow Members of the Rules Committee,

I am a concerned constituent residing in California, MD. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today.

The state of Maryland has been home to seven generations of my family. We are true “Marylanders” who deeply love this state and the people that we share it with. I am here to express my strong opposition to any effort to redraw voting maps in the state of Maryland outside of the regular redistricting cycle. Mid-cycle redistricting is more about political power than fairness to residents.

Redistricting is intended to reflect population changes captured in the U.S. Census, a process that occurs once every ten years. Conducting it in between those periods breaks trust with communities and undermines the promise that every person’s voice matters equally. People, not politicians, should choose their representatives. When elected officials change the rules mid-decade, it is the public who loses representation and confidence in the system.

In 2021, Maryland Democrats attempted to approve an 8-0 map, which was ultimately rejected by the courts for illegal partisan gerrymandering. Although the January 2026 map submitted by the Redistricting Advisory Commission varies from the previously submitted and rejected map, the proposed 2026 map demonstrates a continued attempt at partisan gerrymandering to eliminate the one and only Republican seat for the 48% of Marylanders who are not registered to vote as Democrats.

The January 2026 map submitted by the commission proves the point that mid-cycle redistricting is more about political power than fairness to residents, as it breaks Cecil and Hartford Counties off of District 1 from adjoining neighbor, Kent County. Replacing Cecil and Hartford Counties, the proposed map crosses the Chesapeake Bay into the non-adjoining/non-neighboring areas of Anne Arundel and Howard Counties. These Counties are located between Baltimore, Montgomery, and Prince George’s Counties, which are densely populated cities with high concentrations of Democrat registered voters. In no way is this area representative of, neighboring, adjoining, or a natural continuation of District 1, our beautiful, rural eastern shore.

The cracking and dispersing District 1 into non-adjoining and non-representative areas with higher concentrations of democrat voters is a deliberate dilution and elimination of the voices of Republican and Independent voters.

We watched Governor Moore's appearance on Meet the Press Now, when asked about the Washington Post's remarks that Governor Moore's redistricting plan serves to further disenfranchise Republican voters, Governor Moore's response was, "IDGAF." The Governor of our state, states out loud, "I don't give a [expletive]" about non-democrat voting citizens? This redistricting map confirms Governor Moore's disenfranchising statement. The redistricting lines in this map reflect an attempt at 100% democrat power while depriving 48% of Maryland voters of representation.

It disheartens me when I hear my Republican and Independent voting friends say, "Why bother. Our votes are cancelled out by Baltimore, PG and Montgomery County." Maryland is much, much, more than Baltimore, Prince George and Montgomery County. Maryland is a very diverse state with mountains, cities, rural areas, farms, and beaches. The people are just as diverse. The seats that we hold should reflect this diversity with fairness and reasonable boundaries that reflect that diversity. 48% of us are not registered as democrat voters but WE DO EXIST. This is our home. We count. We have a voice and we deserve fair representation. People, not politicians, should choose their representatives.

I urge you to vote "no" to this very partisan gerrymandered mid-cycle redistricting plan (HB0488) and to reject any further proposal for mid-cycle redistricting. Redistricting should serve the people, not politicians.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this urgent matter.

Respectfully,
Pamela Dement
California, MD 20619