



## **TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE**

**HB0332: Civil Actions- Violation of Constitutional Rights (No Kings Act)**

**POSITION: Support**

**BY: Linda Kohn, President**

**DATE: February 18, 2026**

**The League of Women Voters of Maryland strongly believes in the individual liberties guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States, and thus supports House Bill 332: The No Kings Act. The protection and defense of individual liberties is a long-standing League Principle.**

Marylanders possess civil rights safeguarded in the Constitution, including the right to peaceful protest, free speech, and due process; they possess protections against unlawful search and seizure and against excessive force used to disperse peaceful protests or carry out an arrest. The Constitution also prohibits violations against due process and the Equal Protection Clause, such as unlawfully targeting people on the basis of race or national origin.

Under U.S. Code Section 1983, if those constitutionally protected civil rights are violated by a state or local official, that agent can be sued in civil court. Per the statute: "Every person who, under color of [law]...subjects any citizen of the United States or other person within the jurisdiction thereof to the deprivation of any rights, privileges, or immunities secured by the Constitution and laws, shall be liable to the party injured in an action at law, suit in equity, or other proper proceeding for redress..."<sup>1</sup>

But due to a loophole, this law does not apply to federal agents. At present, federal law enforcement officers, including U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents who violate Marylanders' constitutional rights, cannot be sued in civil court.

Passage of HB 332 would grant a right of redress to those Marylanders who are victims of illegal acts by federal law enforcement officers. It would affirm that, in Maryland, no one is above the law, and that the constitutional rights of all individuals must be protected, regardless of who was responsible for the violations.

**The League of Women Voters of Maryland and its 2,000 members urge a favorable report on House Bill 332.**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=granuleid:USC-prelim-title42-section1983&num=0&edition=prelim>