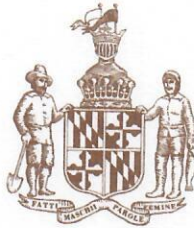


CHRISTOPHER T. ADAMS
Legislative District 37B
Caroline, Dorchester, Talbot,
and Wicomico Counties

Economic Matters Committee



The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 426
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3343 · 301-858-3343
800-492-7122 Ext. 3343
Fax 410-841-3299 · 301-858-3299
Christopher.Adams@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Delegate Christopher T. Adams on behalf of the
Dorchester County Delegation
Presenting
House Bill 950
Commemorative Days-Maryland Voting Equity Reform Day

- ***Why is the Bill being introduced?***

In 1986, the Maryland Constitution was amended to remove the requirement that all county commissioners and council members be elected through at-large voting. Statewide, at-large voting effectively disenfranchised our minority and rural populations.

- ***What does the Bill do?***

This bill requires the Governor to annually proclaim the fourth Tuesday of October as Maryland Voting Equity Reform Day.

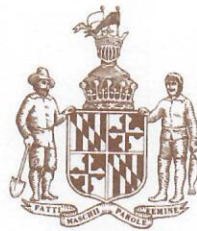
- ***Why is it important to pass now?***

It is important to pass this bill now to celebrate and commemorate the efforts of the ten men from Northern Dorchester County who led the effort to amend the Maryland Constitution in 1986. This bill celebrates voting equity for our minority and rural citizens across Maryland.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chris Adams", located at the bottom right of the page.

CHRISTOPHER T. ADAMS
Legislative District 37B
Caroline, Dorchester, Talbot,
and Wicomico Counties

Economic Matters Committee



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 12, 2020

The Honorable Shane Pendergrass
Chair
Health & Government Operations Committee
6 Bladen Street, Room 241
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

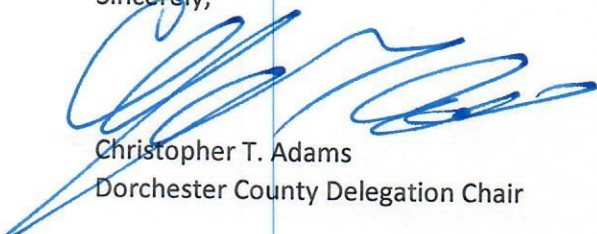
RE: HB950 – Commemorative Days-Maryland Voting Equity Reform Day

Dear Chair Pendergrass,

This letter is to advise the Health and Government Operations Committee that the above-referenced bill was voted on by the Dorchester County Delegation and received a favorable vote.

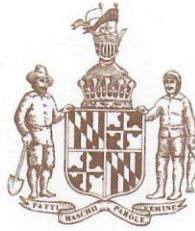
The Delegation's vote is attached.

Sincerely,


Christopher T. Adams
Dorchester County Delegation Chair

CHRISTOPHER T. ADAMS
Legislative District 37B
Caroline, Dorchester, Talbot,
and Wicomico Counties

Economic Matters Committee



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Dorchester County Delegation Vote Tally

Commemorative Days-Maryland Voting Equity Reform Day

Please initial your approval

Name	Approve	Disapprove	Date
Delegate Adams	<i>a</i>		<i>1/29/2020</i>
Delegate Mautz	<i>AM</i>	<i>AM</i>	<i>1/28/20</i>
Delegate Sample-Hughes	<i>SH</i>		<i>1/28/20</i>

COUNTY COUNCIL OF DORCHESTER COUNTY

**COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING
P.O. BOX 26
CAMBRIDGE, MARYLAND 21613
PHONE: (410) 228-1700
FAX: (410) 228-9641**

**JAY L. NEWCOMB, PRESIDENT
LIBBY HANDLEY NAGEL, VICE PRESIDENT
WILLIAM V. NICHOLS
GEORGE L. PFEFFER, JR.
RICKY C. TRAVERS**



**KEITH ADKINS
COUNTY MANAGER
E. THOMAS MERRYWEATHER
COUNTY ATTORNEY**

March 4, 2020

The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass
Health and Government Operations Committee
Room 241, House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Letter of Support for House Bill 950 Entitled "Commemorative Days-Maryland Voting Equity Reform Day"

Dear Delegate Pendergrass, Chair and Committee Members:

On behalf of the Dorchester County Council, I respectfully offer its support for House Bill 950 entitled "Commemorative Days-Maryland Voting Equity Reform Day" which will establish a Maryland Voting Equity Reform Day.

Dorchester County, and more specifically the northern area, is the Birthplace of Maryland Voter Reform. Due to the efforts of the following local men the Maryland Constitution was amended to provide equity to all citizens in the State of Maryland in local elections: George C. Jones, Don W. Bradley, Richard Harding, Edward Conway, Leon Medford, Charles F. Hurley, Sr., Oliver Harding, William Reid, William O. Corkran and Gregory Meekins. Currently the only monument that memorializes their actions is located in Dorchester County. The County Council believes that the State should also recognize their efforts which lead to statewide voter reform and supports the establishment of a Maryland Voting Equity Reform Day. We ask that you do the same and look favorably upon House Bill 950.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this letter of support. Please contact the Council's Office at (410) 228-1700 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

DORCHESTER COUNTY COUNCIL

Jay L. Newcomb
President

jln/dl

cc: The Honorable Adelaide Eckardt, Senator
The Honorable Christopher T. Adams, Delegate
The Honorable Sheree Sample-Hughes, Delegate
The Honorable Johnny Mautz, Delegate

TESTIMONY

To: The Honorable Delegate Christopher T. Adams
From: Mr. Johnny M. Tillery, Private Citizen
Bill: House Bill Commemorative Days – Maryland Voting Equity Reform Days
Hearing: March 12, 2020
Position: Support for House Bill 950 Maryland Voting Equity Reform Day

Dear Delegate Adams:

I am writing this letter in support of The House Bill 950 Commemorative Days – Maryland Voting Equity Reform Days. The bill would be an instrument that would recognize North Dorchester County as the Birthplace for Maryland Voter Reform. To be celebrated annually, on behalf of The Maryland Voting Equity Reform Day. It would bring a sense of pride to the community of Dorchester County to re-ignite the bravery of the 10 bold men that stood against the disparity in The Maryland Constitution. By their efforts The Maryland Constitution was amended in 1986. Because the previous one disenfranchised minority and rural citizens regarding fair voting rights. The amendment to the Constitution provided voting equity to all citizens of the counties in Maryland. And to symbolized it, a monument was created name The Historical Freedom Shrine. Therefore, I support the passing of the bill to acknowledge the phrase on the base of the forty-thousand-pound blue granite monument “Lest we forget”. There is no better way to do that than have an annual ***Maryland Voting Equity Reform Day***.

Sincerely,

Mr. Johnny M. Tillery, Private Citizen



Victoria Jackson-Stanley
Mayor

City of Cambridge

City Hall

410 Academy Street - P O Box 255
Cambridge, Maryland 21613
Phone: 410-228-4020 Fax: 410-228-4554
MD Relay (V/TTY) 711 or 1-800-735-2258
E-Mail mayor@choosecambridge.com

Letter of Support

TO: Delegate Chris Adams

FROM: Mayor Victoria Jackson-Stanley

DATE: March 9, 2020

Bill: House Bill 950 Commemorative Days- Maryland Voting Equity Reform Days

Position: Support

Dear Delegate Adams:

As Mayor of the great City of Cambridge Maryland, please accept this letter of Support for House Bill 950-Commemorative Maryland Voting Equity Reform Day in the State of Maryland.

North Dorchester Maryland is the Birthplace of Maryland Voter Reform.

The Maryland Constitution was amended in 1986, because the previous one disenfranchised minority citizens and rural citizens regarding fair voting rights. They were disenfranchised for more than one hundred thirty-five years.

The Maryland Monument for Voter Reform: The Historical Freedom Shrine is the only monument memorializes ten Dorchester County men; whose tireless efforts led to statewide reform in all local elections.

Amending the Constitution provided voting equity to all citizens of the counties in Maryland.

Respectfully Submitted

Victoria Jackson-Stanley
Mayor

Adams, Christopher Delegate

From: Rick Price <rickmp1054@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 10:32 PM
To: Adams, Christopher Delegate; cpestherapist3@verizon.net
Subject: HB950

Honored Delegates, I am writing to support HB 950 to serve as a reminder of the importance of voting. While serving on the Dorchester County Council representing the North Dorchester area, I was contacted by and began working with the Historical Freedom Shrine Advocacy Team to help promote and educate others about Dorchester County's history of changing the at large voting system to a district voting system in 1986 to help assure that voters in all districts could elect a representative to be their voice in county government. This resulted in the placement of a monument in the north end of the county in 1987 to serve as a reminder of the 10 men who worked to make our county and our state the best it can be in terms of voting for representation in our government. I introduced proclamations recognizing this on the county level several times while I served on the county council. I feel that your support of this bill will go far in communicating this to voters everywhere. Thank you for your consideration. Sincerely Rick Price, former Dorchester County Councilman from District 4

TESTIMONY

TO: The Honorable Delegate Christopher Adams
House and Government Operations Committee

FROM: Gregory L. Meekins *Gregory L. Meekins*
1344 Cambridge Beltway
Cambridge, MD 21613

Re: Support for HB 950- Commemorative Days, Maryland Voting
Equity Reform Bill

Date: March 9, 2020

Dear Delegate Adams and Committee:

On behalf of the Historical Freedom Shrine Advocacy Team I am pleased and humbled to support House Bill 950 which will be before your committee considering the Maryland Voting Equity Reform Day. As one of the "Ten" men that worked to help facilitate the amending of the State Constitution in 1986 to provide voting equity to all citizens of the counties of Maryland I support this legislation.

As a native of Dorchester County and former president of the Dorchester County NAACP when this initiative began, I believe this bill does much for this generation and the generation after us to remember and continuously promote the importance of voting equity in our State. This is particularly germane as we see assaults on voting access and equity in several jurisdictions around the country.

So that we don't forget the work of the "Ten" that has preceded us in this area so important to our democracy, I respectfully solicit your Committee's favorable action of this bill. This action will be of tremendous value to Dorchester County and the State of Maryland.

Thank you in advance for your favorable consideration of SB 464.

Memorandum of Support

DATE: March 10, 2020

TO: The Honorable Delegate Christopher Adams
House and Government Operations Committee

FROM: Akil K. Rahim, Past President Dorchester County NAACP

REFERENCE: Support for House Bill 950- Commemorative Days, *Maryland Voting Equity Reform Bill*

Hearing: March 12, 2020

Position: Support

Honorable Delegate Christopher Adams:

I am a former resident of Dorchester County – born in Cambridge, raised in Hurlock, attended and graduated from the public schools there.

This memorandum is written in support of and as a request for your support of the passage of House Bill 950 Commemorative Days – **Maryland Voting Equity Reform Days**. Its passage will establish an annual recognition of voting equity reform in Maryland as commemorated on The Historical Freedom Shrine erected in 1987 and is located on the west side of East New Market-Ellwood Road.

The Historical Freedom Shrine commemorates a required change in the Constitution of Maryland ordered by the United States Courts; subsequently, bringing full democracy to and granting equitable voting rights for Dorchester County's minority and rural citizens.

Please support the passage of **House Bill 950 Commemorative Days – Maryland Voting Equity Reform Days**.

Akil K. Rahim

Adams, Christopher Delegate

From: Frances Cresswell <fpcresswell@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2020 11:35 PM
To: Adams, Christopher Delegate
Subject: Maryland Voting Reform Day legislation: HB950

TESTIMONY

TO: Honorable Christopher Adams

FROM: Frances Cresswell

BILL: Commemorative Days: Maryland Voting Equity Reform Day

HEARING: March 2020

POSITION: Support

Dear Delegate Adams and Committee Members:

I am writing in support of HB 950. Maryland Voting Equity Reform Day should be celebrated as the change from all "at-large" county council members written into the earlier Maryland Constitution to county district representation has enabled minorities of all kinds greater voice in the decisions made by legislators. The term "at-large" would seem to designate that the members would act without favoritism, but in practice the reverse was the case.

In Dorchester County, where the change was first envisioned, from 1850 through 1980, no county council members were elected 1) from a rural area, or 2) "of color". All council members came from the county seat, and all were white. The decisions by the council reflected these two facts.

With a day celebrating the change to the Maryland Constitution, students and all citizens of Maryland will become more aware of the importance of how they are represented.

Thank you for your time.

Frances Cresswell

Retired, formerly Director of Dorchester County Public Library