



**BILL: SB0089**

**BILL TITLE: Municipalities - Vacancies in Elected Offices**

**BILL SPONSOR: Senator Peters**

**COMMITTEE: EHEA**

**POSITION: Favorable**

**HEARING DATE: 2.18.2021**

### **TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF SB0089**

Represent Maryland believes in democracy and that all politics are local. Currently, the way in which most legislative vacancies are filled at the hyper-local, local, and state level are not democratic. In fact, they are known to be the opposite, where insiders appoint their friends and colleagues and regular voters are left out of the process completely.

We believe all vacancies should be filled by a real special election, one in which voters cast their vote for who they want to represent them moving forward. In the last 3 years, more and more vacancies have been filled by appointment, meaning there are more unelected lawmakers in legislatures than any other time in recent history. This trend must end. The MDGA must close the unelected-lawmaker pipeline that exists in much of Maryland, and this bill is a first step.

When voters know that their vote doesn't matter, when they know that decisions are made behind closed doors, when they know that the daughter of a sitting lawmaker is more likely to be appointed to a seat simply for being related, they become disillusioned and disgruntled. American democracy has eroded to the point of being nearly unrecognizable and it's not simply a bunch of radical extremists. It's the failure of our lawmakers to adapt and change to meet modern expectations. The people of Maryland want real special elections. Please find SB0089 favorable and show voters that you are listening to them.

Sincerely,  
Cristi Demnowicz  
Chair  
Represent Maryland  
Maryland Voter-D7

Represent Maryland is a grassroots anti-corruption group of citizen advocates that #FightForDemocracy in Maryland.

Our democracy solutions include: Public Election Funds, Independent Redistricting, Special Elections, Ranked Choice Voting, Increased Ethics and Transparency, and Increased Voter Participation. Learn more about our work at

[www.RepresentMaryland.org](http://www.RepresentMaryland.org)

Authorized by Represent Maryland PAC, T Miller, Treasurer

