

FOR HB 655 TESTIMONY

Madam Chair, Mr. Vice Chair, and members of the House Ways and Means Committee.

I am Reverend Roderick McClanahan, Pastor of the First Missionary Baptist Church of Lexington Park, Maryland

I appeal to you concerning Maryland House Bill 0655. The proposed modification would make it possible for County Commissioners in the state of Maryland to be elected by a relative majority of the votes in their own districts, rather than at-large. Electing our County Commissioners by our present system, silences our voices as voters in various districts and allows the voices of those of the majority party to dominate the process. We consider this undemocratic because it leaves the people without representation in our local governments.

The General Assembly has an opportunity to modify the present system which violates the spirit of the Voting Rights Act, Section 2.

Again, I ask that you right a wrong that subject our districts and communities of failed attempts to ensure that we as voters elect qualified and concerned representation within our districts.

I am respectfully asking for a favorable report.