

Written Statement in Support of House Bill No. 1490.
Submitted January 5, 2024

My name is Kenneth J. Laverriere. I am writing in full and unqualified support for House Bill No. 1490 offered on January 19, 2024, by Delegate Reaser and others.

I am a resident of Loudoun County and qualified voter in Precinct 413. I am also the Chairperson of the Governance Committee of the Loudoun County Democratic Committee (LCDC) and the Vice-Chairperson of the LCDC Voter Protection Committee. In the last four election cycles, I have been an active poll observer for the Democratic Party and regularly attend public meetings of the Loudoun County Electoral Board (Loudoun Electoral Board). I am an attorney by profession. I am writing today on my own behalf and not as a representative of any organization or group.

As the distinguished members of the General Assembly are aware, a vocal and well-funded minority in our country, in our Commonwealth, and in Loudoun County have determined that the candidates they offer and the ideas they support in our elections cannot prevail (i) when all individuals eligible to register to vote have the necessary information and the reasonable opportunity to do so, and (ii) where all qualified voters actually vote. The result is an insidious and ongoing pattern of voter intimidation, disinformation, and suppression by this minority.

Some examples from Loudoun County are sufficient to illustrate the point:

- The Loudoun Electoral Board's decision last year to eliminate early Sunday voting.
- The Loudoun Electoral Board decision this year (without previous announcement in its posted agenda) to eliminate week-day satellite voting in eastern Loudoun County (partially reinstated for the primary election by pressure from the public and the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors).
- The apparent countenance by the Loudoun Electoral Board of "conspiracy" theories and other baseless "distractions" intent on disrupting or challenging elections. It is worth noting that, by any standard, the elections in Loudoun County to date have been run professionally and reliably and consistently produce valid and timely election results in each primary and general election. The effectiveness of our elections in Loudoun County is due to the professional and competent employees of the Office of Elections and Loudoun County's investment in state-of-the-art voting equipment, multiple early voting locations, and the training and ongoing support for our volunteer election workers.
- The targeted and well-funded communications (voice, written and electronic) launched in each election cycle that are intended to intimidate and suppress voting and voter

turn-out by certain groups of qualified voters. As you know, in 2023, at least one such disinformation campaign was the subject of a cease-and-desist order by the Office of the Attorney General of Virginia.

All of these points have been made to the Loudoun Electoral Board during the public content portion of the Board's meetings, but, based on the Board's recent actions, it appears that the board is intent on curtailing (rather than expanding) voter access and on serving a narrow portion of its constituency rather than all citizens of our county. That is simply not in the public interest.

HB-1490 will not solve all challenges we face in preserving our democracy and assuring access by all qualified voters to free and open elections. But it is an important step that will help protect the locations and times for satellite early voting. As the distinguished members of the Assembly are aware, not all voters are alike: Some work multiple jobs; some care for young children or aging parents; others have limitations on when and how they can vote. Insulating the times and locations for early satellite voting from the whims and political agenda of public officials will go a meaningful way to preserving for all voters a fair chance to vote.

For these reasons, I respectfully request your full and timely support in 2024 for this important legislation.