§ 17-204. Definitions. For the purposes of this title:

1. "At-large" method of election means a method of electing members to the governing body of a political subdivision: (a) in which all of the voters of the entire political subdivision elect each of the members to the governing body; (b) in which the candidates are required to reside within given areas of the political subdivision and all of the voters of the entire political subdivision elect each of the members to the governing body; or (c) that combines at-large elections with district-based elections, unless the only member of the governing body of a political subdivision elected at-large holds exclusively executive responsibilities. For the purposes of this title, at-large method of election does not include ranked-choice voting, cumulative voting, and limited voting.

2. "District-based" method of election means a method of electing members to the governing body of a political subdivision using a districting or redistricting plan in which each member of the governing body resides within a district or ward that is a divisible part of the political subdivision and is elected only by voters residing within that district or ward, except for a member of the governing body that holds exclusively executive responsibilities.

3. "Alternative" method of election means a method of electing members to the governing body of a political subdivision using a method other than at-large or district-based, including, but not limited to, ranked-choice voting, cumulative voting, and limited voting.

4. "Political subdivision" means a geographic area of representation created for the provision of government services, including, but not limited to, a county, city, town, village, school district, or any other district organized pursuant to state or local law.

5. "Protected class" means a class of individuals who are members of a race, color, or language-minority group, including individuals who are members of a minimum reporting category that has ever been officially recognized by the United States census bureau.

5-a. "Language minorities" or "language-minority group" means persons who are American Indian, Asian American, Alaskan Natives or of Spanish heritage.

6. "Racially polarized voting" means voting in which there is a divergence in the candidate, political preferences, or electoral choice of members in a protected class from the candidates, or electoral choice of the rest of the electorate.

7. "Federal voting rights act" means the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965, 52 U.S.C. § 10301 et seq., as amended.

8. The "civil rights bureau" means the civil rights bureau of the office of the attorney general.

9. "Government enforcement action" means a denial of administrative or judicial preclearance by the state or federal government, pending litigation filed by a federal or state entity, a final judgment or adjudication, a consent decree, or similar formal action.