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Rep. Jamie Raskin 'not seeing' Electoral College challenge for Trump

By JOHN FRITZE

THE BALTIMORE SUN | JAN 05, 2017



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Rep. Jamie Raskin (Karl Merton Ferron / Baltimore Sun)

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WASHINGTON — Freshman Maryland Rep. Jamie Raskin threw cold water on the idea of challenging President-elect Donald Trump's victory when Congress meets Friday to formally tally Electoral College votes, saying he doesn't see a path for success.

"I would love to challenge the Electoral College vote because our election was badly tainted by everything from cyber-sabotage by Vladimir Putin, to deliberate voter suppression by Republicans in numerous swing states," the Montgomery County Democrat said in a statement to The Baltimore Sun.

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"But it's a very hard thing to prove that an election would have turned out differently than it did, and the law requires a challenge from both the House and the Senate, and I'm not seeing that happen," he said.

Raskin's comments followed a story in Politico on Thursday that named him as one of several House Democrats considering an objection -- even though such an effort stands virtually zero chance of advancing.

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Raskin, a former state lawmaker who represents Maryland's 8th Congressional District, told Politico there "has to be a basic accounting to the people for how our process works," but acknowledged Republican majorities were unlikely to consider any challenge.

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The rules require at least one member of the House and one senator to make an objection in writing, and it was uncertain Thursday whether any Democratic senators would come forward to support that effort.

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An objection would amount to a protest backed by liberal groups that have raised questions about the legitimacy of Trump's election.

As a state lawmaker in Annapolis, Raskin led the effort to have Maryland join a mutli-state compact that would bypass the Electoral College system -- which he describes as "obsolete and dysfunctional" and instead award a majority of electors to the winner of the popular vote.

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That was in response to the 2000 election, in which Democrat Al Gore won the popular vote but Republican President George W. Bush won the majority of electors. Similarly, Democrat Hillary Clinton won the popular vote in November -- and also carried Maryland -- but Trump captured 304 Electoral College votes.

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