Department of Legislative Services

Maryland General Assembly
2014 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 25   (Delegate George)

Ways and Means   Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Local Government - Municipal Elections - No-Excuse Absentee Voting

This bill prohibits a municipality from requiring an individual to provide a reason that the individual will be unable to vote in person on Election Day in order to vote by absentee ballot.

The bill takes effect June 1, 2014.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: None. The bill is not expected to affect municipal finances.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Under the Local Government Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, a qualified voter may vote in a municipal election by absentee ballot. A municipality must provide a procedure to vote by absentee ballot and may use any method to enable absentee voters to vote, including using any facilities to transmit and receive applications for absentee ballots.

Under the Election Law Article, an individual may vote by absentee ballot except to the extent preempted under an applicable federal law. The Election Law Article governs State, county, and Baltimore City elections, but generally does not govern municipal elections other than those in Baltimore City. Prior to the enactment of Chapter 6 of 2006,

absentee voting was only available under the Election Law Article to persons who were unable to vote in person on Election Day for specified reasons.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): State Board of Elections, Maryland Municipal League, cities of Hagerstown and Laurel, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 27, 2014
mc/hlb

Analysis by: Scott D. Kennedy   Direct Inquiries to:
                                                    (410) 946-5510
                                                    (301) 970-5510