

CLARENCE K. LAM, M.D., M.P.H.
Legislative District 12
Baltimore and Howard Counties

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
Committee

Executive Nominations Committee

Joint Committee on Ending Homelessness

Chair

Joint Committee on Fair Practices and
State Personnel Oversight



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 420
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3653 • 301-858-3653
800-492-7122 Ext. 3653
Clarence.Lam@senate.state.md.us

Support: SB 757

Election Law - Voting Systems - Accessibility for Voters With Disabilities

Issue:

- Many people with disabilities use an electronic ballot marking device (BMD) to mark their ballot
- The BMD used in Maryland creates a ballot that is significantly different in size and form than the bubble sheets used by the general public
- Maryland requires a protected class to use a separate ballot system than the general public
- Voters with disabilities are being deprived of their right to a secret ballot
- SBE's policy of having only five voters uses a BMD is not sufficient to obscure the ballots cast by people with disabilities
- SBE has had consistent difficulty preventing voters with disabilities from receiving a segregated ballot

What SB 757 does:

- Requires SBE to certify a ballot system where all voters use an accessible BMD
- Prohibits ballots cast by voters with disabilities from being distinguishable from ballots cast by voters without disabilities

How SB 757 helps:

- Ensures that voters with disabilities receive a secret ballot
- Avoids the difficulties faced by SBE in ensuring that a sufficient number of non-disabled voters use a BMD in order to obscure the ballots of voters with disabilities