

STATEMENT BY DAVID NAIMON, Member, Montgomery County Board of Elections, on HB137 BEFORE THE HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE, January 29, 2020

Chairman Kaiser and Members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is David Naimon, and I'm the Secretary of the Montgomery County Board of Elections. I'm here speaking for myself and my two colleagues (Elisse Barnes and Alan Banov) in the minority (by law) on the Board (although Democrats are 60% of the county's registered voters).

You might think that with 11 early voting sites and an increasing number of voters using them, Montgomery County should not have had long lines at any polling place on Election Day. Yet on General Election Day in 2018, 57 county polling places - about ¼ of all our polling places - had peak waiting times of more than the 30-minute national standard. And in 12 Election Day polling places - including three along the Route 29 corridor in eastern Montgomery County- peak waiting times exceeded one hour; in fact, one exceeded two hours!

Early voting helps to shorten lines at the polling places on Election Day. That's why we enthusiastically support HB137, the Montgomery County Delegation's bill to add a 12th early voting site in Montgomery County. While the Board majority members oppose the bill, we're pleased that **the County Executive and all 9 members of the County Council, as well as all 24 members of the County Delegation in the House of Delegates, also support this legislation. The bill specifies that the White Oak Recreation Center, located in the less affluent eastern portion of Montgomery County, will be the 12th early voting site in Montgomery County for the 2020 elections. In 2016, you passed and the Governor signed legislation adding the Potomac Community Recreation Center as an additional early voting site in Montgomery County. (I've attached a copy of the 2016 law.) What was good enough for Potomac in 2016 is good enough for White Oak in 2020!**

They say "a picture's worth a thousand words," but I think a map must be worth at least 10,000 words. I call your attention to three maps I've attached for you. First, the map of Election Day 2018 peak wait times shows the peak waiting times in every Montgomery County precinct, with darker colors signifying longer peak waiting times. **You can see that waiting times were a significant problem for the precincts on the Route 29 corridor** (See attached map.)

Comparing the first map with the second map of early voting utilization by precinct shows that **the more that voters in precincts in the Route 29 corridor near White Oak utilized early voting in 2018, the lower their Election Day wait times.**

Third, a map of Montgomery County's population density shows one of the reasons that's the case - the White Oak Recreation Center is in a high population density area.

Finally, adding an early voting site in White Oak would help to address inequities within Montgomery County. White Oak residents are far more likely to use public transportation, which means it will take them far longer to get to their closest early voting sites. By locating early voting in White Oak, you have the chance to help make the time it takes eligible voters to vote more equitable, and to support the views of virtually every elected official in Montgomery County.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue. I'd be happy to try to answer any questions you may have.