

BRIAN E. FROSH
Attorney General



ELIZABETH HARRIS
Chief Deputy Attorney General

CAROLYN QUATTROCKI
Deputy Attorney General

FACSIMILE NO.

STATE OF MARYLAND
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

WRITER'S DIRECT DIAL NO.
410-576-6584

February 6, 2020

To: The Honorable Anne R. Kaiser
Chair, Ways and Means Committee

From: Hannibal G. Williams II Kemerer, Legislative Director, Office of the Attorney General

Re: HB 197 Election Law – Qualification of Voters – Proof of Identity (OPPOSE)

House Bill 197 amends Sections 10-310 and 16-201 of the Election Law Article to require election judges to establish voter identification (ID) requirements to establish each voter's identity as a prerequisite to voting. Voter ID requirements have historically served to disenfranchise the elderly, people of limited means, and people of color.¹ Maryland law should seek to expand the franchise to as many eligible citizens as possible.

For all of the foregoing reasons, the Office of Attorney General respectfully urges an unfavorable report on HB 197.

cc: Members of the Committee

¹ See Sari Horwitz, *Getting a photo ID so you can vote is easy. Unless you're poor, black, Latino or elderly*, WASH. POST (May 23, 2016), available online at: https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/courts_law/getting-a-photo-id-so-you-can-vote-is-easy-unless-youre-poor-black-latino-or-elderly/2016/05/23/8d5474ec-20f0-11e6-8690-f14ca9de2972_story.html (last visited Feb. 6, 2020); see also, Issie Lapowsky, *A Dead-Simple Algorithm Reveals the True Toll of Voter ID Laws*, WIRED (Jan. 4, 2018), available online at: <https://www.wired.com/story/voter-id-law-algorithm/> (last visited Feb. 6, 2020).

