

# **SB 37 - Election Law - Registered Voter List Secur**

Uploaded by: Antoine, Joanne

Position: FAV

**February 4, 2021**

**Testimony on SB 37**  
**Election Law - Registered Voter List Security and Electronic Signature Requirements for Petitions**  
**Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs**

**Position: Favorable**

Common Cause Maryland supports SB 37, which will empower citizens by enhancing their ability to directly participate in the petition process guaranteed under the Maryland Constitution.

The petition process is an important part of Maryland's democratic government; it gives citizens the chance to have their voice heard and to bring legislative action they disagree with to the voters to decide. It is a process that deserves greater accessibility but continues to be restrictive.

The process of petitioning largely involves direct contact with Maryland voters. The methods of reaching voters typically involve canvassing at high traffic locations like metro stops and farmers markets or going door-to-door. And while petitions can be posted online, it requires proper formatting which typically comes in the form of a pdf, limiting overall usability for most voters.

This existing process creates unnecessary hurdles to an already limited tool as most voters have limited availability to interact in-person with petitioners for reasons ranging from work schedules to access to public transportation. This proves even more difficult for the voters who are confined to their place of residence.

SB 37 seeks to address this by codifying the temporary regulations adopted by the State Board of Elections (SBE) during the 2020 elections in response to COVID-19, allowing for electronic petition signatures. This temporary change which has been extended by SBE utilizes the technology available to us, creating greater access to all citizens throughout the state and making the process of verifying signatures seamless for election officials.

Citizens often times feel like power is out of their hands. SB 37 is a step forward in that it helps reduce barriers that usually hinder direct participation in the petition process by voters. Public engagement in the democratic process should be encouraged, whether citizens are voting for elected officials or bringing issues to the ballot.

We urge a favorable report.

# **SB37 - Our Revolution Maryland - FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Balachandran, Suchitra

Position: FAV



Feb. 2, 2021

Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee  
SB 37 - Election Law - Registered Voter List Security and Electronic Signature Requirements for  
Petitions  
Position - Favorable

Dear Chair Pinsky, Vice-Chair Kagan and Members of the Committee:

In essence, the proclamation of a State of Emergency by the Governor on March 5, 2020 stopped in-person signature collection on petitions. We appreciate and support the decision by the State Board of Elections (SBE) to expeditiously institute a policy, just six weeks later, to permit the gathering of electronic signatures on April 22, 2020. At a time of crisis and upheaval in so many other aspects of our lives, the SBE policy provided a quick alternate avenue for citizens to continue to exercise their legal rights to collect petition signatures.

Set to expire on August 3, 2020, the last day to submit petitions to place a question or a candidate on the November 2020 ballot, the policy has been repeatedly extended by the SBE, first to the January 13, 2021 and most recently to May 27, 2021, resulting in very little disruption to petitioners gathering signatures towards the 2022 election. To our understanding, Maryland stands with only a handful of other states in having taken these steps during the COVID-19 crisis. It speaks to our state's commitment to uphold voting rights in every way possible.

What we have found is that electronic petitions have increased the accessibility of citizens to become aware of the existence of petitions and to sign them without having to run into a volunteer holding a clipboard. The cleaner set of signatures verified through the voter database are both administratively easier to certify and easier for petitioners to maintain a count of clean signatures. However, electronic signatures did not make signature collection a trivial exercise. Of the three citizen-driven petitions we became aware of, only one succeeded in collecting sufficient signatures to place the question on the 2020 ballot.

The current crisis has shown us many new ways to communicate and carry out business. We ask for a favorable report on SB 37 to codify yet another democracy good that has emerged from this crisis.

Submitted respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Suchitra C. Balachandran'.

Suchitra Balachandran  
ORMD State Organizing Committee

**GMOM\_SB37test\_020421.pdf**

Uploaded by: Cooper, Charlie

Position: FAV



Get Money Out – Maryland

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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND  
ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE  
IN SUPPORT OF SB 29 – REGISTERED VOTER LIST SECURITY AND  
ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE REQUIREMENTS FOR PETITIONS**

**February 4, 2021**

Get Money Out (GMOM) is an all-volunteer organization established eight years ago. We want all citizens to have equal access to the ballot and an equal say in governance. Through our grassroots actions, we have signed up over 9,000 supporters.

We support Senate Bill 37, which aims to assure the security of petitions submitted to the Board of Elections. In response to the pandemic the State Board of Elections has already taken measures to allow electronic signatures to be submitted on petitions, but their action was temporary. As with many provisions adopted for the pandemic, the public will expect continued use of electronic communications in order to improve access to the political process for citizens. This bill will codify and improve the security of that process on a continuing basis. The bill contains provisions to assure that signatures are valid and that those collecting petitions take reasonable measures to protect the data prior to its being submitted to the Board of Elections. The language has been carefully vetted to optimize improved access for the public, verifiability, and security. We urge a favorable report.

**SB0037\_Represent Maryland\_Favorable .pdf**

Uploaded by: Demnowicz, Cristi

Position: FAV

# REPRESENT MARYLAND

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**BILL: SB0037**

**BILL TITLE: Election Law - Registered Voter List Security and Electronic Signature Requirements for Petitions**

**BILL SPONSOR: Senator Carter**

**COMMITTEE: EHEA**

**POSITION: FAVORABLE**

**January 26, 2021**

## **TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF SB0037**

Cristi Demnowicz, Chair  
Represent Maryland

In the year 2021, where you can order anything you need online 24 hours a day, you can have “face-to-face conversations with people on the other side of the world, and I can give formal verbal testimony from my dining room table, this bill makes sense. Add to that the fact that we are in the midst of a viral pandemic that is projected to last at least another year-our laws and method must be updated to reflect how society is now functioning.

Electronic signatures for petitions have already been made temporarily permissible, all this bill does is make them permanent. This is a small lift with big impact and will show voters that the legislature is serious about making it easier for them to participate in the democratic process.

Please find SB0037 favorable, and bring petitioning into the 21st century.

Sincerely,  
Cristi Demnowicz  
Chair  
Represent Maryland  
Maryland Voter-LD07

Represent Maryland is a grassroots anti-corruption group of citizen advocates that #FightForDemocracy in Maryland. Our democracy solutions include: Public Election Funds, Independent Redistricting, Special Elections, Ranked Choice Voting, Increased Ethics and Transparency, and Increased Voter Participation.

[Cristi@RepresentMaryland.org](mailto:Cristi@RepresentMaryland.org)

Authorized by Represent Maryland PAC, T Miller, Treasurer  
[www.RepresentMaryland.org](http://www.RepresentMaryland.org)

**PGCYD Press Release 1\_21\_21 (1).pdf**

Uploaded by: Elliott, Richard DeShay

Position: FAV



## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
2021 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Contact: Martin Mitchell

President  
410-493-7966/president@pgcyd.com

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### Prince George's County Young Democrats

Prince George's County, MD - The membership of the Prince George's County Young Democrats Legislative Committee have unanimously supported the following coalitions and policy resolutions.

#### Coalitions

- Medical Aid in Dying (MAID) Bill Coalition
- Essential Worker's Coalition
- Maryland Rise - Paid Family Leave Coalition

#### Policy Resolutions

##### In Support Of:

- The expulsion of Delegate Mary Ann Lisanti. Lisanti referred to District 25 as a "nigger district" in the company of several state legislators. She was censured for this act in February 2019 but has refused to resign.
- The renaming of the House Office Building to honor Congressman Elijah Cummings. Former Chair of the Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland, first Black legislator to be named Speaker Pro Tempore, Congressman from Maryland's 7th Congressional District from 1996-2019, Chair of the Oversight & Reform Committee during the Trump presidency, and leading figure in Trump's impeachment by the House of Representatives.
- Banning the Maryland state government and local governments from the sale or purchase of items produced by prison labor unless paid prevailing wages.
- The Housing Justice package (HB52; HB18/SB154; HB104/SB401). Sponsored by Delegates Vaughn Stewart, Jheanelle K. Wilkins, Melissa Wells, Wanika Fisher and Senators Jill P. Carter, Will Smith, Charles Sydnor, & Shelly Hettleman.
- The Tax Fairness package (HB215; HB262; HB319; HB201). Sponsored by Delegate Julie Palakovich Carr to make Maryland's local property taxes & capital gains taxes are assessed in a progressive manner that lowers the burden for working families and ends tax loopholes in "opportunity zones" & carried interest.
- HB120/SB178. Sponsored by Delegate Gabriel Acevero & Senator Jill P. Carter, to expand public transparency of police data.
- HB15. Sponsored by Delegate Joseline Peña-Melnyk, to create a Governor's Office of Immigrant Affairs.

#### *Written By:*

Phylicia Henry, *Chair of Legislative Affairs as a Whole.*

Janna Parker, *Chair of County Affairs.*

Richard DeShay Elliott, *Chair of State Affairs.*

*Interested members of the general public are encouraged to join the Prince George's County Young Democrats, regardless of geographic location, as long as they meet two criteria: they are registered Democrats or Independents, and they are below the age of 40.*

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- **HB28. Sponsored by Delegate Joseline Peña-Melnyk, to require Implicit Bias Training for medical professionals.**
- **HB309. Sponsored by Delegate Joseline Peña-Melnyk, to require a racial and ethnic health breakdown in state medical data.**
- **HB227. Sponsored by Delegate Nick Charles, to establish civil liability for improper police calls.**
- **HB82. Sponsored by Delegate Wanika Fisher, to amend the Maryland Constitution to guarantee a clean and safe environment for all Marylanders. HB82**
- **HB375. Sponsored by Delegate Kriselda Valderrama, to expand paid family leave in Maryland.**
- **HB124. Sponsored by Delegate Kriselda Valderrama, to protect employees from aerosol-transmitted diseases, including COVID-19.**
- **HB411. Sponsored by Delegate Nicole Williams, to prohibit sexual contact between law enforcement and those under arrest. HB411**
- **HB63. Sponsored by Delegate Nicole Williams, to prohibit state expenditures on magnetic levitation transportation systems. HB63**
- **HB171. Sponsored by Delegate Alonzo Washington, to study school discipline statistics in Maryland. HB171**
- **HB206. Sponsored by Delegate Alonzo Washington. to expand Early Voting hours in Maryland.**
- **HB153. Sponsored by Delegate Julian Ivey, to expand vote by mail in Maryland.**
- **HB24. Sponsored by Delegate Julian Ivey, to make primary and general Election days as state holidays in Maryland.**
- **HB336/SB276. Sponsored by Delegate Julian Ivey & Senator Jill P. Carter. to ban private police departments for universities.**
- **HB168/HB221. Sponsored by Delegates Julian Ivey & Veronica Turner, to address credit discrimination in motor vehicle insurance.**
- **HB51. Sponsored by Delegate Veronica Turner to require environmental justice analysis during the zoning process for landfills.**
- **HB172. Sponsored by Delegate Mary Legman to require combined reporting of corporate income taxes, as is practice in 29 states and DC.**
- **HB341. Sponsored by Delegate Mary Lehman, to begin the tabulation of absentee ballots 14 days before Election Day, as is practice in Arizona.**
- **HB524. Sponsored by Delegate Mary Lehman, to require the presentation of rental licensing during court proceedings involving rental properties.**
- **HB194. Sponsored by Delegate Melissa Wells, to require implicit bias training for police officers.**
- **HB413. Sponsored by Delegate Melissa Wells, to require implicit bias training for**

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judges.

- **HB355/SB37.** Introduced by Delegate Sheila Ruth & Senator Jill P. Carter, to ensure electronic collection of ballot signatures and expand the public's ability to gather signatures.
- **HB89/SB397.** Sponsored by Delegate Jheanelle K. Wilkins & Senator Jill P. Carter, to shorter incarceration sentences with academic options.
- **HB222/SB224.** Sponsored by Delegate Jheanelle K. Wilkins & Senator Chris West, to ensure that incarcerated individuals are aware of their voting rights and are given the opportunity to vote.
- **HB155/SB98.** Sponsored by Delegate Jheanelle K. Wilkins & Senator Cory McCray, to ban discrimination in pre-k programs and schools.
- **HB41.** Sponsored by Delegate Stephanie Smith, to establish a state banking taskforce.
- **HB320.** Sponsored by Delegate Stephanie Smith, to ease the transfer of credits.
- **Legislation to shield eviction proceedings from the general public and protect the credit and financial history of tenants.** Sponsored by Delegate Nicole Williams.

#### **Favorable With Amendments**

- **HB238.** Sponsored by Delegate Melissa Wells, to automatically expunge certain crimes after a certain period of time, expanding job opportunities for returning citizens.  
Amendment, introduced by Janna Parker:  
"Crimes that have been expunged or not found guilty for, should be retroactively removed from the Maryland CaseSearch database."
- **HB269.** Sponsored by Delegate Melissa Wells, to create urban agriculture grants.  
Amendment, introduced by Richard DeShay Elliott:  
"Prince George's County will be included in the implementation of this bill, following upcoming rezoning"

#### **In Opposition Of:**

- **The nomination of Bryon Bereano to the Circuit Court. Prince George's County voters did not nominate him to the Court in the 2020 elections. His Senate confirmation should be denied.**

"The members of PGCYD remain committed to amplifying their voices on potential policy decisions that could impact their communities and daily life. We look forward to working with our elected leaders to ensure that public policy presented before us, is for us and for the betterment of everyone, and not just a select few", Henry said.

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#### ***Written By:***

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Janna Parker, *Chair of County Affairs.*

Richard DeShay Elliott, *Chair of State Affairs.*

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**SB0037\_ Electronic\_Signatures\_MLC\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Plante, Cecilia

Position: FAV



**TESTIMONY FOR SB0037  
ELECTION LAW – REGISTERED VOTER LIST SECURITY AND ELECTRONIC  
SIGNATURE REQUIREMENTS FOR PETITIONS**

**Bill Sponsor:** Senator Carter

**Committee:** Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

**Organization Submitting:** Maryland Legislative Coalition

**Person Submitting:** Cecilia Plante, co-chair

**Position:** **FAVORABLE**

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0037 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Coalition members are generally very active participants in election work and also in getting ballot petition signatures. This bill makes the process of getting signatures on ballot petitions easier by allowing for electronic signatures. We understand that this process was created due to the pandemic, but it has been successful and should become permanent. Having more people engaged and empowered to support people and ideas that affect our state is a positive thing.

Many of our member groups also do canvassing and phone banking and work with the voter lists. We think it is important to make sure that the voter data should be secure and only used to support the voting process.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.

**SB0037.pdf**

Uploaded by: Schablein, Jared

Position: FAV

## **Election Law - Registered Voter List Security and Electronic Signature Requirements for Petitions**

**Bill Sponsor:** Senator Jill Carter

**Committee:** Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

**Organization Submitting:** Lower Shore Progressive Caucus

**Person Submitting:** Jared Schablein, LSPC Chair

**Position:** **FAVORABLE**

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0037 on behalf of the Lower Shore Progressive Caucus. The Caucus is a political and activist organization on the Eastern Shore, unaffiliated with any political party, committed to empowering working people by building a Progressive movement on the Lower Eastern Shore.

Ensuring that all Marylanders can easily participate in our Democratic Process is a top priority of the Lower Shore Progressive Caucus and our members. SB0037 is a common-sense bill that achieves this crucial goal in two major ways.

The first way is by better securing vital information crucial to running our elections. The bill accomplishes this by requiring the State Board of Elections adopt regulations specifying requirements for the secure storage and use of voter data for copies of the registered voters list.

The second way is by modernizing the State Board of Elections and their process. The bill accomplishes this by requiring the State Board to adopt regulations specifying procedures for the collection of electronic signatures on petitions. By allowing the collection of electronic signatures for petitions we can ensure our State Board of Election and our Democratic Process is keeping with the times as well as make it easier for voters to be informed and involved in our elections.

To put it simply allowing voters the ability to sign petitions electronically makes our system more accessible, more Democratic, and in step with the world we live in today based around technology. It is for these reasons the Lower Shore Progressive Caucus supports this bill and recommends a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.