

Municipal Election Data SB287.pdf

Uploaded by: Diane Barrett

Position: FAV

Town of Hampstead
1034 S. Carroll Street
Hampstead, MD 21074

February 14, 2023

Maryland State Senate
Education, Energy & Environment Committee

Re: Written testimony in support of SB287

Dear Members of the Committee:

As an elected representative of the Town of Hampstead, I am writing to you in support of Senate Bill 287, which will require the State Board of Elections to publish municipal election results on its website.

For residents of municipalities, the mayor and council members are their first tier of government with the closest reach. The decisions that municipal representatives make regarding infrastructure, economic development, and ordinances have the most direct impact on the daily lives of the residents.

It is quite contradictory that residents have much more difficulty finding historical election data for their representatives who are in the closest proximity. At a time when election integrity is repeatedly called into question, increased transparency of election data at all levels of government is of utmost importance to help restore the public's faith in one of our most important rights and civic duties.

Thank you for taking this matter into consideration for passage into law.

Sincerely,

Diane Barrett

Council Member
Town of Hampstead

SB287_SupportLetter.pdf

Uploaded by: Haven Shoemaker

Position: FAV

Haven N. Shoemaker, Jr.

February 14, 2023

Maryland Senate
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

RE: Favorable Testimony for SB287

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee:

I am honored to have the opportunity to testify before my former committee in support of Senate Bill 287.

During my time as an elected official, I have had the distinct privilege of serving as a Hampstead Town Council Member and eventually the Mayor of Hampstead. These results cannot be easily found on the internet, rather you would have to search through local newspaper archives to find these past results.

Senate Bill 287 would make it easier and more transparent to find municipal election results, and it allows the municipality and the Maryland Board of Elections a more than adequate amount of time to coordinate and post the results. This bill will allow for election results for municipalities to be easily accessible as we continue to adapt to modern technology and see the unfortunate decline of local newspapers.

I would like to thank the Chair and Committee Members for considering this written testimony, and I look forward to a favorable report regarding Senate Bill 287.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Haven N. Shoemaker, Jr.", is positioned above the printed name.

Haven N. Shoemaker, Jr.

SB 287 FAV Joe Vigliotti.pdf

Uploaded by: Joseph Vigliotti

Position: FAV

JOSEPH A. VIGLIOTTI

Carroll County Commissioner, District 1

220 Grand Drive

Taneytown, MD

21787

410-596-3778

jvigliotti@carrollcountymd.gov

SENATE BILL 287 (FAV) –

State Board of Elections – Municipal Elections – Publication of Results on Website

February 14, 2023

Maryland House of Delegates

Ways and Means Committee

RE: Written Testimony in Support of Favorable Report for SB 287

I write in support of SB 287 which would require the publication of municipal election results on the Maryland Board of Elections website.

While I currently serve as a County Commissioner on the Carroll County Board of Commissioners, I was previously elected three successive times to the City Council of Taneytown, where in my most recent term, I served in the capacity as Mayor Pro Tem.

It is well-learned American wisdom that all politics is local, and that the most local government is the most adaptive and responsive, suited uniquely to address uniquely local circumstances.

As such, I have personally witnessed a renewed interest in local elections, with records being set in the last several years for voter turnout in Taneytown. Citizens rightly recognize what a tremendous and positive impact local governance can have when carried out responsibly and capably, and how so much of what affects daily life is determined at the local level. These are the kinds of things sometimes taken for granted, but which we depend upon regularly: clean water and efficient sewers, fully-manned and well-funded police departments, operable streetlights, maintained streets, parks, public spaces, and more. It is through the municipal decision-making process that choices are directly and regularly seen and experienced by municipal citizens, firsthand.

In addition to renewed interest and participation in local elections, citizens have also come to expect improved measures to ensure election integrity and transparency – and municipal governments have responded in various ways. For example, Taneytown requires a paper trail for absentee and mail-in ballots, requires campaign finance reporting, and provides seating for poll watchers.

Part of that process of continuing integrity and transparency is the ability to access election results. While results are posted, reported, and maintained by municipal governments, tracking down those results can sometimes be unintentionally difficult. Search engines do not always yield the most precise results, and election returns may be relocated on websites over time for one reason or another.

Election results do not merely demonstrate which candidates won or lost, but serve as an official record of elections. They demonstrate that municipal elections count just as much as state and national elections, that municipal voices also matter amongst the ever-unfolding course of human history. They demonstrate the seriousness with which even municipal level government is to be taken. They reflect the beliefs, ideas, hopes, dreams, trends, and concerns of citizens, and serve as a measure of the American body politic writ small.

America is a ground-upward nation, where local events reverberate nationally. Given that municipal elected officials interact and work with county, state, and national elected officials, how their voices translate or magnify upwards depends upon whom voters choose to represent them.

All politics is local, indeed. The American Founding did not begin in a marble-pillared edifice, but in small town churches and hamlet meeting halls, in conversations held among friends along country roads, between farm fields, in trade shop floors, and on village greens.

For those who are interested in how their elections turned out, for those who have a vested interest in their communities, and for those who are considering the important choice of filing as a municipal candidate, it only makes sense that municipal election results should be collected and easily accessible along with local, state, and national election results.

After all, who knows what great events might touch the quiet places we call home?

SB287.pdf

Uploaded by: larry hushour

Position: FAV

As the Mayor of Mount Airy (pop: 9,700), I would like to endorse SB287, for the following reasons:

- 1) We have lost our small town local newspaper during the Covid years, therefore the print media that was available to keep citizens informed of truly local issues, such as municipal elections, no longer exists.
- 2) Mount Airy sits at the edge of 4 counties. Therefore, we are not adequately covered by the County papers (Carroll County Times and Frederick News Post) on most local issues, such as our municipal elections.
- 3) All citizens (including many elderly) are transitioning to the internet for all news regarding our local elections, and therefore are becoming reliant on social media and websites for updates and reports of our local elections.
- 4) The State, imo, should step up to fill the void of all municipality's degraded, or lost printed media and provide a resource for citizens to relatively quickly see municipal election results on the internet.
- 5) The State should also, imo, maintain a visible, transparent history of the municipal elections and keep them posted (available) for review so citizens may reference them in future municipal elections.

I fully support SB287 and believe it is critical in our post-Covid environment and the citizen's transition to a reliance on the internet including websites and social media. This will enhance research of candidates past performance, keep citizens informed and fill a void as printed media continues to unfortunately, substantially degrade.

SB 287 - State Board of Elections - Municipal Elec

Uploaded by: Morgan Drayton

Position: FAV

February 16, 2023

Testimony on SB 287
State Board of Elections – Municipal Elections – Publication of Results on Website
Education, Energy, and the Environment

Position: Favorable

Common Cause Maryland supports SB 287, which would increase transparency in the election process by requiring the State Board of Elections (SBE) to publish municipal election results online in a timely manner. Voters should be able to easily access election results and data in one place – for every level of government - without having to scour the internet to piece together multiple sources. With the rise of election denials and security threats to our elections, it is critical to promptly publish clear, factual, and consistent election data from a trusted source.

Given that SBE already collects and publishes similar data from each local board of elections, SB 287 proposes a common-sense measure that can be easily adopted by the Board. Collecting and publishing municipal election data falls well within the capabilities of the Board's existing infrastructure, making this an easy fix that would significantly benefit the public.

We strongly urge a favorable report.

SB 287 Favorable (1).pdf

Uploaded by: Senator Gallion

Position: FAV

JASON C. GALLION
Legislative District 35
Harford and Cecil Counties

Education, Energy, and
the Environment Committee



Annapolis Office
James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 420
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3603 · 301-858-3603
800-492-7122 Ext. 3603
Fax 410-841-3115 · 301-858-3115
Jason.Gallion@senate.state.md.us

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 15th, 2023

The Honorable Brain Feldman, Chair

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Re: SB 287 – State Board of Elections – Municipal Elections – Publication of Results on Website

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chairman Feldman and fellow committee members,

SB 287 simply requires that 30 days after election results are certified, a municipality must email over an electronic copy of the election results to the State Board of Elections.

Instead of requiring the SBE to create an online portal for the municipalities to upload the results (as stated in the current draft of the bill and in the Fiscal & Policy Note), the SBE has requested that the results just be emailed over to them and they will publish the results on their website where they will be organized by election year and then the name of the municipality. As a result, this bill will not increase general fund expenditures at all.

There are 157 municipalities in the State of Maryland, some large and some small, small urban and some rural. In any given year, there are dozens of elections taking place for Councilmembers, Aldermen, Mayors, and even a Burgess.

Unfortunately, it is not easy to find past municipal election results. For the most part, an individual has to search a local newspaper's online archives to find past municipal election results but this is getting more and more difficult as local newspapers shut down, get bought, or put up paywalls. Some municipalities put up their election results on their website but those typically go down by the time the next election comes around.

I respectfully ask for a favorable report on SB 287 to allow for a central online hub for the voters of Maryland to have easy access to current and past Municipal election results.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jason Gallion".

Senator Jason Gallion

SB 287_City of Havre de Grace_Rybczynski_FWA (1).p

Uploaded by: Adam Rybczynski

Position: FWA



City of Havre de Grace

711 PENNINGTON AVENUE, HAVRE DE GRACE, MARYLAND 21078
WWW.HAVREDEGRACEMD.COM

410- 939-1800
410- 575-7043

February 16, 2023

The Honorable Senator Brian J. Feldman, Chair
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Favorable With Amendments - Senate Bill 287 - State Board of Elections – Municipal Elections – Publication of Results on Website

Chair Feldman and the Honorable Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

The Mayor and City Council of Havre de Grace (“the City”) supports SB 287 with an amendment. If passed, the bill would require the State Board of Elections to maintain an electronic portal on its website through which municipalities submit election results; and require the State Board to publish municipal election results on its website.

The City respectfully requests the committee give SB 287 a favorable report with the following amendment.

Suggested Amendment to SB 287.

On page 2, in line 5, after “AFTER” insert **the results of**.

On page 2, in line 5, after “ELECTION” strike “IS HELD” and substitute with **are certified**

(C) WITHIN 30 DAYS AFTER **THE RESULTS OF** A MUNICIPAL ELECTION ~~IS HELD~~ **ARE CERTIFIED**, THE MUNICIPALITY SHALL SUBMIT TO THE STATE BOARD ELECTION RESULTS FOR EACH OFFICE OR QUESTION VOTED ON AT THE ELECTION, INCLUDING:

2023.02.14 - 02 P - Letter of Support for Senate B

Uploaded by: Daniel Hoff

Position: FWA

**Daniel E. Hoff, Councilmember
City of Westminster**

23 Park Avenue
Westminster, MD 21157
410-259-0779
dhoff@westminstermd.gov

SENATE BILL 287
State Board of Elections – Municipal Elections – Publication of Results on Website
Position: SUPPORT

February 14, 2023

Maryland Senate
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Re: Senate Bill 287 – Written Testimony in Support

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee,

I write in support of Senate Bill 287 with the amendments offered by the Maryland Municipal League (MML). Senate Bill 287 will make the results of past municipal elections more readily available to the public, thereby increasing transparency. Presently, the State Board of Elections website contains the primary and general election results for county, state and federal elections, but does not include the results of past municipal elections, except for Baltimore City, Cumberland and Hagerstown. There are 157 municipalities in Maryland, and it can be very challenging for a member of the public to find past election results for a particular municipality, especially as local newspapers and their associated websites with searchable archives continue to disappear. Having a centralized online location managed by the State Board of Elections for the voters of Maryland to find past municipal election results is simply good government at work, and therefore, I encourage you to support Senate Bill 287 by issuing a favorable committee report.

Thank you,



Daniel E. Hoff

SB 287 -FWA- MML.pdf

Uploaded by: Justin Fiore

Position: FWA



Maryland Municipal League

The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns

TESTIMONY

February 16, 2023

Committee: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Bill: SB 287 – State Board of Elections – Municipal Elections – Publication of Results on Websites

Position: Support with Amendment

Reason for Position:

The Maryland Municipal League supports Senate Bill 287 with one technical amendment. As introduced, the bill would require municipalities to share election results with the State Board of Elections to host on their website within 30 days after the election is held. The League has no concerns with making this information more available to Marylanders, but we do believe it would be more appropriate to clarify they be submitted within 30 days after the election is certified to fully count all ballot types and process any potential recounts.

Therefore, the League respectfully requests that this committee provide SB 287 with a favorable report with the following amendment:

(C) WITHIN 30 DAYS AFTER THE RESULTS OF A MUNICIPAL ELECTION ARE CERTIFIED IS HELD, THE MUNICIPALITY SHALL SUBMIT TO THE STATE BOARD ELECTION RESULTS FOR EACH OFFICE OR QUESTION VOTED ON AT THE ELECTION, INCLUDING:

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Theresa Kuhns
Angelica Bailey Thupari, Esq.
Bill Jorch
Justin Fiore

Chief Executive Officer
Director of Advocacy & Public Affairs
Director of Public Policy
Deputy Director of Advocacy & Public Affairs

1212 West Street, Annapolis, Maryland 21401

410-268-5514 | 800-492-7121 | FAX: 410-268-7004 | www.mdmunicipal.org