



## Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

CREATING CHANGE • IMPROVING LIVES

House Ways and Means Committee

**HB 95: Election Judges - Training and Signs - Accommodations for Voters in Need of Assistance**

**January 24, 2023**

**Position: Support**

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council (DD Council) is an independent, public policy organization that creates changes to make it possible for people with developmental disabilities to live the lives they want with the support they need. People with developmental disabilities and their families lead the DD Council. **From that perspective, the DD Council supports HB 95 as it will make voting in-person easier and more accessible for people with disabilities.**

### **WHAT does this legislation do?**

HB95 95 requires:

- Training materials provided to election judges include information on the various ways that an election judge can provide assistance or accommodations to elderly voters and voters with disabilities.
- The State Board of Elections to develop and post signs at a polling place that clearly explain how election judges can provide assistance and accommodations to voters with disabilities.

### **WHY is this legislation important?**

- All Marylanders must have equitable access to their fundamental right to vote.
- Election judges and staff working at polling places should be knowledgeable and aware of the ways to support voters with disabilities and able to provide assistance and information that allows all voters to easily, privately, and fairly participate in the electoral process.
- It will promote an inclusive and supportive environment at polling locations.

HB 95 is an important step to ensure that people with disabilities have the resources necessary to exercise their fundamental right to vote. For that reason, the DD Council supports HB 95.

**Making information accessible to everyone is fundamentally a practice of inclusion. If the State Board of Elections develops signs in plain language, the information will be more accessible to people with disabilities and the public. Therefore, the DD Council recommends that any signs developed and posted be in plain language.**

Contact: Rachel London, Executive Director, [RLondon@md-council.org](mailto:RLondon@md-council.org)

217 E. Redwood Street, Suite 1300 • Baltimore, MD 21202 • 410.767.3670 • [md-council.org](http://md-council.org)

Dee Sapp, *Chairperson* • Rachel London, Esq., *Executive Director*