



Maryland Association of Election Officials

Representing the Local Election Boards of the State of Maryland

February 17, 2023

Delegate Vanessa Atterbeary, Chair
Maryland House Ways and Means Committee
Room 131, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

HB0616 - Information Only

Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and Committee Members:

My name is Katherine Berry. I am the Election Director in Carroll County and the chair of the Maryland Association of Election Officials (MAEO) Legislative Committee. MAEO represents the local boards of elections throughout the State of Maryland. I am writing today to represent MAEO with information regarding HB616 Election Law – Early Voting – Number of Days.

MAEO is committed to ensuring Marylanders have full access to their ballots and running our elections smoothly, openly and fairly. While we understand that there is a perception of decreasing access to our voters, we would be remiss if we did not take note of the benefits of reducing Early Voting days. There are fiscal benefits as outlined in the fiscal note.

The number of early voting days raises concerns about ensuring election parity among all aspects of the election process, particularly for candidates and election services with lower funds and resources. Historically, our lowest turnout days are Saturday and Sunday.

| General Election Year | EV Turnout Day 1 - Thursday | EV Turnout Day 2 - Friday | EV Turnout Day 3 - Saturday | EV Turnout Day 4 - Sunday | EV Turnout Day 5 - Monday | EV Turnout Day 6 - Tuesday | EV Turnout Day 7 - Wednesday | EV Turnout Day 8 - Thursday | Total |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------|
| 2022 | 43,724 | 45,358 | 26,513 | 25,754 | 43,772 | 49,738 | 59,058 | 88,055 | 381,972 |
| 2020 | 152,030 | 149,129 | 150,350 | 129,302 | 129,117 | 70,707 | 72,377 | 134,017 | 987,029 |
| 2018 | 87,409 | 81,132 | 55,583 | 56,648 | 90,789 | 91,480 | 87,170 | 113,065 | 661,276 |
| 2016 | 123,623 | 123,314 | 80,294 | 74,068 | 102,781 | 107,716 | 119,463 | 143,494 | 874,753 |
| 2014 (10am-8pm hours) | 42,880 | 38,806 | 19,851 | 16,267 | 40,081 | 40,786 | 44,718 | 64,257 | 307,646 |

Finally, the most valuable and limited resource we have at MAEO is our people. Our Local Board employees and judges work long hours during the election cycle, which can lead to burnout, especially if the early voting period extends beyond a week. If the pattern of reduced turnout at early voting continues, since mail-in voting is becoming more popular, it may be practical to consider altering the days and/or times of early voting

Thank you for your time. If you have any questions, please contact me at (410)386-2958 or Katherine.berry@maryland.gov.