



**Testimony in SUPPORT of  
House Bill 951: County Boards of Education – Voter Registration Link – Posting  
Requirement**

**Ways & Means Committee**

**Position: Favorable**

February 26, 2024

Strong Schools Maryland envisions a future in which Maryland leads the nation in high-quality, equitable education practices and policies. This future requires that we not only advocate *for* the voices of students, but work *with* students to empower them. We can empower student voices through encouraging civic engagement. Civic engagement refers to the participation of individuals in their communities and governments. Registering to vote is one of the ways in which students can learn to use their voices to make change in their communities.

However, the process of voter registration and voting itself can often be confusing and inaccessible depending on the circumstances of the student. According to a poll conducted by Opportunity Youth United, 39% of young voters considered not knowing how to vote a barrier to their civic engagement.<sup>1</sup> Tufts University published research stating that schools are uniquely able to reach youth in a systemic manner. Cultivating an understanding of civic processes, such as voting and voting registration, and removing barriers to voting is key to inspiring young voters.<sup>2</sup>

House Bill 951 simply dictates that the local boards of education clearly place the voter registration link on their websites, indicating that voter registration is possible for students sixteen and older. Creating this website change will increase the accessibility of voter registration for students, encouraging students to be civically engaged, a value that will positively impact the school climate.

Strong Schools Maryland urges the committee to recognize the importance of amplifying student voices and the role that the education system has in inspiring our young voters. We can do this by increasing the visibility of civic processes through the passing of this proposed legislation.

**For these reasons, we strongly urge a favorable report on House Bill 951.**

<sup>1</sup> [Engaging Broader Youth Electorate: 10 Recommendation for Increasing Voter Engagement](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Growing Voters: Engaging youth Before the Reach Voting Age to Strengthen Democracy](#)

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