

House Bill 142 – Election Law – **Absentee Ballots – Signature Requirements and Verification**

Favorable

Currently Maryland Petitions must be signed and the signatures are verified by the local board of elections office where as the signatures on the Absentee/Mail-In ballot envelopes are not verified.

By not passing this bill you are saying that the validity of a Maryland Petition is more important than the validity of a Maryland Election.

The verifying of the signature on the mail-in ballot envelope is crucial to maintaining the chain-of-custody that is guaranteed when a person votes in person. As a past election judge we were trained to watch each voter “like a hawk” from check-in to scanning so that they are the only one who touches the ballot, marks the candidate, and scans the ballot. You do not have the same controls for mail-in ballots one they leave the Board of Elections office and enter the USPS. Signature verification of the returned mail-in ballot is one very important and critical way to improve the chain-of-custody of mail-in voting.

David Morsberger
1241 Village Lake Drive
Davidsonville, MD 21035