



Ella Ennis, Legislative Chairman
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The Honorable Vanessa Atterbeary, Chairman
and Members of the Ways and Means Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
Annapolis, Maryland

RE: **HB 0202** – Absentee Ballots - Signature Requirements and Verification - **SUPPORT**

Dear Chairman Atterbeary and Members,

The Maryland Federation of Republican Women strongly supports HB 0202.

It is important that every vote cast be the vote of a validly registered voter. HB 0202 requires that every absentee ballot envelope be signed by the voter and a witness, and that the signature of the voter be verified against the voter's signature on their voter registration record. The bill provides an exception to the witness signature requirement for military personnel and their families serving overseas.

Without the voter's signature and signature verification on absentee ballots, a ballot could be filled out by another person and the valid voter denied their right to vote. Ballots can be lost or stolen from mail boxes, particularly in multi-family housing or group home facilities. Verification of the voter's signature on their absentee ballot return envelope is an important safeguard.

Please vote a **FAVORABLE** report for **HB 0202**.

Sincerely,
Ella Ennis
Legislative Chairman
Maryland Federation of Republican Women