

Subject: Support of HB641 with Amendment

Date: February 13, 2024

From: National Federation of the Blind of Maryland

15 Charles Plaza, #3002, Baltimore, MD 21201

president@nfbmd.org

To: House Ways and Means Committee

The National Federation of the Blind of Maryland is in support of this legislation because it finally requires voting by the ballot marking device at curbside locations if that is the voters choice. This phrase in the bill will protect blind voters and give them a right to a secret ballot and to privacy which they have in traditional in-person voting.

HB641 should be amended to require that the ballot marking device be brought outside to the voter and specify what happens to the ballot after the voter uses the ballot marking device, as it does for the paper ballot. This amendment is necessary because the bill is incomplete without it; voter rights must be guaranteed. Other states, such as Texas, have specifically required procedures for the ballot marking device in the bill. The voters of Maryland are entitled to the same protections as voters in other states.

Please amend this bill and cast your vote as favorable only if it is amended.