



Maryland Association of Election Officials

Representing the Local Election Boards of the State of Maryland

March 21, 2025

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

SB534 - Support Without Amendment

Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and Committee Members,

The Maryland Association of Election Officials (MAEO) is the professional membership organization representing local election officials and Election Boards across all 24 jurisdictions in Maryland. Our members are committed to ensuring the smooth and effective administration of elections, and to making Maryland elections accessible, secure, and fair.

Senate Bill 534 addresses an ongoing issue faced by our local boards by ensuring that compensation for training is provided only after an election judge has served on election day or during early voting. This provision is designed to ensure that only those who fulfill their commitment are compensated for training, addressing the issue of “no-show” judges who have cost local boards significant amounts of money.

MAEO fully supports the **original provision** allowing public school students to receive **both** service-learning credit and election judge compensation. It's essential to recognize that when students serve as election judges, they are fulfilling a portion of their service-learning requirement. Receiving state mandated compensation should not diminish that service. We want to ensure that students do not have to choose between getting credit for fulfilling their service requirement and being paid for their time. Both should be available to them, as they are performing a valuable civic duty, just as other election judges are.

By changing "and" to "or," this amendment directly contradicts MAEO's position and would have the opposite effect of what we support. Since **election boards are legally required to pay all election judges**, this change would immediately prevent students from receiving service-learning credit statewide. **We strongly urge you to reject this amendment.** If that is not possible, we ask that you pass the bill with only the no-show judge provision.

The compensation provided to students is more than just an incentive or reward for their participation—it is a **matter of equity**. For students who might otherwise be unable to serve, this payment helps offset costs that would make participation inaccessible. Ensuring students are properly compensated not only recognizes the value of their contributions to the democratic process but also encourages future civic engagement.

We are grateful for your attention to this important issue and for your continued support of election officials in Maryland.