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**TESTIMONY BY BOARD PRESIDENT DAVID A. NAIMON ON SENATE BILL 645
CHANGING THE GUBERNATORIAL PRIMARY ELECTION DATE
FROM THE LAST TUESDAY TO THE FOURTH TUESDAY IN JUNE
HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE 3-25-2025**

Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and Members of the Ways and Means Committee, for the record, my name is David Naimon, and I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I'd also like to thank Senator Kagan for introducing this important legislation, and Del. Wilkins for introducing HB 945, the House version of this legislation. I'd also like to thank this Committee for supporting HB 945 and to urge you to similarly support SB 645. I'm the President of the Montgomery County Board of Elections and I'm testifying today on behalf of our Board. Our county board proposed and strongly (and unanimously on a bipartisan basis) supports this legislation and urges a favorable report. I was joined in the Senate Committee hearing by my former colleague Jim Shalleck, who served as President of our Board for six years during the Hogan Administration. Jim and I disagree on quite a few things, but we agree about the importance of passing this bill.

In short, this bill makes a modest but important change in the electoral calendar in gubernatorial primary election years that have five Tuesdays in June by moving the primary election date from the *fifth* Tuesday in June to the *fourth* Tuesday in June. For 2026, for example, this bill would move Primary Election Day from June 30 to June 23, and Early Voting from June 18-25 to June 11-18. That *one-week* change in the primary election date that moves it closer to the end of the school year would provide a number of important benefits for voters, election administrators, and election workers across the State, likely resulting in increased in-person voter turnout, a greater ability for voters to use their voting method of choice (Election Day, Early Voting, or Mail-In Ballot), a higher number of election judges, shorter lines for in-person voting, and a greater likelihood of getting earlier final primary election results.

There are a number of benefits to having the June primary election a week earlier:

1. Moving Early Voting a week earlier in 2026 (and other years when there are five Tuesdays in June) would avoid coinciding with both the Juneteenth National Independence Day (Friday, June 19) and Father's Day (Sunday, June 21). That combination is likely to lead to lower turnout on those dates as many voters (and prospective election judges) may take a long weekend rather than spending it at Early Voting. Lower turnout during those three days of early voting could lead to more people voting by mail-in ballot, which could lengthen the mail-in ballot canvass and therefore the time it would take to get final election returns.
2. Having Early Voting and Election Day closer to the end of school year and avoiding summer vacations makes it easier for voters to vote in-person and election officials to recruit election judges and student volunteers.
3. We rely on public facilities and especially public schools to use as Election Day polling places,

but summer renovations of school buildings in past years required moving polling places to alternative locations, which can confuse voters and lower voter turnout. In some years, we moved more than 20 such polling places – about 10% of our total number of Election Day polling places. In addition to the harmful effects on voters, these moves require a huge amount of staff and Board member time to find appropriate substitutes. By having the election closer to the end of school, school officials can delay the start of such renovations, allowing us to use the normal polling places, without risking that the schools won't be ready for the first day of the next school year.

4. We rely on many recreation centers for early voting sites, and prefer to have early voting centers in gymnasiums or other large rooms to avoid lines and crowds at the polls. When early voting conflicts with summer camps that are offered for young people in the recreation center, we sometimes can't hold early voting in the gymnasiums without being disruptive to community needs (including interrupting summer camps) and end up in smaller, more crowded rooms. By moving Early Voting one week earlier, it would take place before school's out for summer, making the gymnasiums much more likely to be available for our use.
5. Having Primary Election Day on June 30, 2026 – the last day of the fiscal year – may cause a number of administrative headaches related to the close of the fiscal year while the staff is preparing for and conducting the canvassing of the mail-in ballots at the same time.

SB 645 and HB 945 would amend the statute from the “last” Tuesday in June to the “fourth” Tuesday in June (which would be the same day in years like 2030 and 2034 when June has four Tuesdays, but would be different days in 2026 and 2038 when June has five Tuesdays). We think this modest one-week change in the primary election date would have many positive effects that would benefit voters and help the elections to run smoothly. We urge a favorable report on SB 645.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our views with you today.