



Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

CREATING CHANGE • IMPROVING LIVES

House Ways and Means Committee
HB 153: Election Law - Voter Registration - Age and Notification to Minors
January 21, 2025

Letter of Information

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council (Council) is an independent, public policy organization that creates change to make it possible for people with developmental disabilities to live the lives they want with the support they need.

Voting is a fundamental right that Maryland's citizens with developmental disabilities want and need to access. Researchers found that with more accessible voting options available in the 2020 election, 62% of people with disabilities voted (a six-point increase over 2016)¹. The Council supports policies and practices that make voting more accessible and inclusive for all Marylanders.

We understand the intention of this bill is to increase voter engagement by increasing preregistration opportunities and providing younger people with voting information. To continue to increase voter engagement for people with disabilities, including young people with disabilities, we recommend the State Board of Election ensures that the communication (notice) about voting eligibility is not just made available to individuals 15 years and 9 months old, but that the communication is also fully accessible and in plain language. The best way to do this is by continuing to work with disability advocates in the community.

Contact: Dr. Stephanie Dolamore, Deputy Director, SDolamore@md-council.org

¹ https://smlr.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/Documents/Centers/Program_Disability_Research/FactSheet_Disability_Voter_Turnout_2020.pdf