
By: **Delegates Patterson, Gordon, Healey, Howard, King, and Marriott**
Introduced and read first time: February 5, 2004
Assigned to: Ways and Means

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Election Law - Voter's Change of Party Affiliation - Deadline**

3 FOR the purpose of altering the deadline for a voter to change the voter's party
4 affiliation; and generally relating to the deadline to change party affiliations.

5 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
6 Article - Election Law
7 Section 3-303
8 Annotated Code of Maryland
9 (2003 Volume and 2003 Supplement)

10 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
11 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

12 **Article - Election Law**

13 3-303.

14 (a) Except as provided in [subsections] SUBSECTION (b) [and (c)] of this
15 section, a local board, at the signed request of a registered voter, shall change that
16 voter's party affiliation, or change the voter to or from a decline, at any time that
17 registration is open.

18 (b) (1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection, party
19 affiliation may not be changed:

20 (i) from 9 p.m. on the [Monday, or the next regular business day if
21 the Monday is a legal holiday, that is 12 weeks before the day on which a primary
22 election is to be held under § 8-201 of this article,] 21ST DAY PRECEDING THE
23 PRIMARY ELECTION until and including the day on which the registration reopens
24 after the primary election is held; and

25 (ii) from and including the day of issuance of a gubernatorial
26 proclamation calling a special election, pursuant to § 8-710 of this article, or from 5
27 p.m. on the next regular business day if the day of issuance is a legal holiday, until
28 and including the day on which that special election is held.

1 (2) If a voter requests a party affiliation change during a period specified
2 in paragraph (1) of this subsection, the local board shall make the change if:

3 (i) there is sufficient evidence, as determined by the local boards
4 pursuant to regulations adopted by the State Board, that the request was mailed
5 before the beginning of the period specified in paragraph (1) of this subsection; or

6 (ii) the request was submitted by the voter to the Motor Vehicle
7 Administration, a voter registration agency, another local board, or the State Board
8 before the beginning of the period specified in paragraph (1) of this subsection.

9 (c) [If a registered voter has moved from one county to another within the
10 State since the last general election, the voter may change party affiliation or change
11 to or from a decline, one time only, during a period specified in subsection (b)(1) of this
12 section.

13 (d)] An individual whose registration has been canceled at the individual's
14 request within a period specified in subsection (b) of this section may not reregister in
15 the same county during the same period with a party affiliation or nonaffiliation
16 different from the previous registration.

17 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
18 October 1, 2004.