

HOUSE BILL 1163

G1, F1

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

6lr0894

By: **Howard County Delegation**

Introduced and read first time: February 11, 2026

Assigned to: Government, Labor, and Elections

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Howard County – Voting Age – Board of Education Elections**

3 **Ho. Co. 5–26**

4 FOR the purpose of authorizing the General Assembly to lower the age at which an
5 individual may vote in an election for members of the Howard County Board of
6 Education; altering the minimum age at which an individual in Howard County may
7 vote in an election for members of the Howard County Board of Education; and
8 generally relating to the voting age for Howard County Board of Education elections.

9 BY proposing an amendment to the Maryland Constitution
10 Article I – Elective Franchise
11 Section 1

12 BY proposing an addition to the Maryland Constitution
13 Article I – Elective Franchise
14 Section 1A

15 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
16 Article – Election Law
17 Section 3–102
18 Annotated Code of Maryland
19 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

20 BY adding to
21 Article – Election Law
22 Section 3–102.1
23 Annotated Code of Maryland
24 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
2 (Three-fifths of all the members elected to each of the two Houses concurring), That it be
3 proposed that the Maryland Constitution read as follows:

4 **Article I – Elective Franchise**

5 1.

6 All elections shall be by ballot. Except as provided in **SECTION 1A**, Section 2A, or
7 Section 3 of this article, every citizen of the United States, of the age of 18 years or upwards,
8 who is a resident of the State as of the time for the closing of registration next preceding
9 the election, shall be entitled to vote in the ward or election district in which the citizen
10 resides at all elections to be held in this State. [A person] **AN INDIVIDUAL** once entitled to
11 vote in any election district, shall be entitled to vote there until the [person] **INDIVIDUAL**
12 shall have acquired a residence in another election district or ward in this State.

13 **1A.**

14 **THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY SHALL HAVE THE POWER TO LOWER THE AGE AT**
15 **WHICH AN INDIVIDUAL MAY VOTE IN AN ELECTION FOR MEMBERS OF THE HOWARD**
16 **COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION.**

17 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland read
18 as follows:

19 **Article – Election Law**

20 3–102.

21 (a) (1) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, an individual may
22 become registered to vote if the individual:

23 (i) is a citizen of the United States;

24 (ii) is at least 16 years old;

25 (iii) is a resident of the State as of the day the individual seeks to
26 register; and

27 (iv) registers pursuant to this title.

28 (2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1)(ii) of this subsection, an individual
29 under the age of 18 years:

1 (i) may vote in a primary election in which candidates are
2 nominated for a general or special election that will occur when the individual is at least
3 18 years old; [and]

4 (II) IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 3-102.1 OF THIS SUBTITLE, MAY
5 VOTE IN AN ELECTION FOR MEMBERS OF THE HOWARD COUNTY BOARD OF
6 EDUCATION; AND

7 [(ii)] (III) may not vote in any other election.

8 (b) An individual is not qualified to be a registered voter if the individual:

9 (1) has been convicted of a felony and is currently serving a court-ordered
10 sentence of imprisonment for the conviction;

11 (2) is under guardianship for mental disability and a court of competent
12 jurisdiction has specifically found by clear and convincing evidence that the individual
13 cannot communicate, with or without accommodations, a desire to participate in the voting
14 process; or

15 (3) has been convicted of buying or selling votes.

16 **3-102.1.**

17 (A) THIS SECTION APPLIES ONLY IN HOWARD COUNTY.

18 (B) AN INDIVIDUAL WHO IS AT LEAST 16 YEARS OLD MAY VOTE IN AN
19 ELECTION FOR MEMBERS OF THE HOWARD COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION.

20 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the General Assembly
21 determines that the amendment to the Maryland Constitution proposed by Section 1 of this
22 Act affects only one county and that the provisions of Article XIV, § 1 of the Maryland
23 Constitution concerning local approval of constitutional amendments apply.

24 SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the amendment to the
25 Maryland Constitution proposed by Section 1 of this Act shall be submitted to the qualified
26 voters of the State at the next general election to be held in November 2026 for adoption or
27 rejection in accordance with Article XIV of the Maryland Constitution. At that general
28 election, the vote on the proposed amendment to the Constitution shall be by ballot, and on
29 each ballot there shall be printed the words “For the Constitutional Amendment” and
30 “Against the Constitutional Amendment”, as now provided by law. Immediately after the
31 election, all returns shall be made to the Governor of the vote for and against the proposed
32 amendment, as directed by Article XIV of the Maryland Constitution, and further
33 proceedings held in accordance with Article XIV.

HOUSE BILL 1163

1 SECTION 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That Section 2 of this Act is
2 contingent on the passage of Section 1 of this Act, a constitutional amendment, and its
3 ratification by voters of the State.

4 SECTION 6. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, subject to the provisions of
5 Section 5 of this Act, Section 2 of this Act shall take effect on the proclamation of the
6 Governor that the constitutional amendment, having received a majority of the votes cast
7 at the general election, has been adopted by the people of Maryland.