

SENATE BILL 670

G1

6lr1896
CF HB 1001

By: Senator Kagan

Introduced and read first time: February 6, 2026

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Election Law – Local Board of Elections Employees – Authority at Polling**
3 **Places**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring a police officer who is on duty at a polling place to obey the
5 authority of a local board of elections employee; providing that local board employees,
6 while serving a polling place, have the authority to keep the peace and order the
7 arrest of certain persons; authorizing local board employees, while serving in a
8 polling place, to protect certain rights of, deny admission of, and eject certain
9 challengers and watchers from a polling place under certain circumstances; and
10 generally relating to the authority of local board employees at polling places.

11 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
12 Article – Election Law
13 Section 10–304 and 10–311(d) and (e)
14 Annotated Code of Maryland
15 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

16 BY adding to
17 Article – Election Law
18 Section 10–307.1
19 Annotated Code of Maryland
20 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

23 **Article – Election Law**

24 10–304.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



6 (b) A police officer who is on duty at a polling place shall protect a challenger or
7 watcher in the discharge of the duties of the challenger or watcher.

8 10-307.1.

9 (A) WHILE SERVING IN A POLLING PLACE, A LOCAL BOARD EMPLOYEE HAS
10 THE AUTHORITY TO:

11 (1) KEEP THE PEACE; AND

12 (2) ORDER THE ARREST OF ANY PERSON WHO:

13 (I) BREACHES THE PEACE;

(H) BREACHES ANY PROVISION OF THIS ARTICLE; OR

15 (III) INTERFERES WITH THE WORK OF THE ELECTION JUDGES IN
16 CONDUCTING THE ELECTION AND CARRYING OUT THEIR ASSIGNED TASKS.

17 (B) (1) WHILE SERVING IN A POLLING PLACE, A LOCAL BOARD EMPLOYEE
18 MAY PROTECT A CHALLENGER OR WATCHER IN THE EXERCISE OF THE RIGHTS OF A
19 CHALLENGER OR WATCHER AS PROVIDED IN § 10-311 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

28 (C) A LOCAL BOARD EMPLOYEE MAY EXERCISE THE AUTHORITY UNDER
29 SUBSECTIONS (A) AND (B) OF THIS SECTION INDEPENDENT OF AN ELECTION JUDGE
30 ASSIGNED TO THE POLLING PLACE.

1 10-311.

2 (d) (1) A challenger or watcher may not attempt to:

3 (i) ascertain how a voter voted or intends to vote;

4 (ii) converse in the polling place with any voter;

5 (iii) assist any voter in voting; or

6 (iv) physically handle an original election document.

7 (2) An election judge **OR A LOCAL BOARD EMPLOYEE** may eject a
8 challenger or watcher who violates the prohibitions under paragraph (1) of this subsection.

9 (e) (1) Except as provided in paragraphs (2) and (3) of this subsection, an
10 election judge shall **[permit] ALLOW** an individual other than an accredited challenger or
11 watcher who desires to challenge the right to vote of any other individual to enter the
12 polling place for that purpose.

13 (2) A majority of the election judges **OR A LOCAL BOARD EMPLOYEE** may
14 limit the number of nonaccredited challengers and watchers allowed in the polling place at
15 any one time for the purpose of challenging the right of an individual to vote.

16 (3) A nonaccredited challenger or watcher shall leave the polling place as
17 soon as a majority of the election judges **OR A LOCAL BOARD EMPLOYEE** decides the right
18 to vote of the individual challenged by the challenger or watcher.

19 (4) In addition to restrictions provided under this subsection, all
20 restrictions on the actions of an accredited challenger or watcher provided under this
21 subtitle apply to a nonaccredited challenger or watcher.

22 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June
23 1, 2026.