

SENATE BILL 901

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6lr3391
CF HB 1027

By: **Senators Brooks, Lam, and Muse**

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 – Telephone Voting System – Requirements**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring the State Board of Elections to select, certify, and acquire a
4 telephone voting system for absentee voting by voters who have attested to having a
5 print disability that meets certain requirements; providing for the eligibility of a
6 voter to use the telephone voting system; requiring the State Board to place certain
7 voters on the telephone voting system list; requiring the State Board to send certain
8 voters on the telephone voting system list a certain communication with certain
9 information by a certain day; requiring the State Board to develop and implement a
10 certain voter education campaign; and generally relating to a telephone voting
11 system.

12 BY adding to
13 Article – Election Law
14 Section 9–102.1
15 Annotated Code of Maryland
16 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

19 **Article – Election Law**

20 **9–102.1.**

21 **(A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS**
22 **INDICATED.**

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



(2) "ACCESSIBLE FORMAT" MEANS BRAILLE, LARGE PRINT, AUDIO, OR DIGITAL TEXT THAT IS USED BY BLIND OR VISUALLY IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS OR INDIVIDUALS WITH A PRINT DISABILITY.

(3) "PRINT DISABILITY" MEANS A CONDITION THAT PREVENTS OR INHIBITS AN INDIVIDUAL FROM READING, HOLDING, OR PROCESSING STANDARD PRINTED MATERIALS IN THE ORIGINAL FORMAT.

(B) (1) NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER PROVISION OF LAW, THE STATE BOARD, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE LOCAL BOARDS, SHALL SELECT AND CERTIFY A TELEPHONE VOTING SYSTEM FOR ABSENTEE VOTING BY ELIGIBLE VOTERS WHO HAVE ATTESTED TO HAVING A PRINT DISABILITY THAT MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS SECTION.

(2) THE TELEPHONE VOTING SYSTEM SELECTED AND CERTIFIED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION SHALL BE USED IN ALL COUNTIES.

(3) THE STATE BOARD SHALL ACQUIRE THE TELEPHONE VOTING SYSTEM SELECTED AND CERTIFIED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION.

(C) (1) THE STATE BOARD MAY NOT CERTIFY A TELEPHONE VOTING SYSTEM UNLESS THE STATE BOARD DETERMINES THAT THE VOTING SYSTEM WILL:

(I) PROTECT THE SECRECY OF THE BALLOT;

(II) PROTECT THE SECURITY OF THE VOTING PROCESS;

(III) RECORD ALL VOTES ACCURATELY;

(IV) PROTECT ALL OTHER RIGHTS OF VOTERS AND CANDIDATES;

(V) BE CAPABLE OF CREATING A PAPER RECORD OF ALL VOTES CAST SO THAT AN AUDIT TRAIL IS AVAILABLE IN THE EVENT OF A RECOUNT, INCLUDING A MANUAL RECOUNT;

(VI) SECURELY AUTHENTICATE THE IDENTITY OF THE VOTER BEFORE ALLOWING A BALLOT TO BE CAST, INCLUDING THROUGH THE USE OF PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS, VOICEPRINT, OR OTHER TECHNOLOGY;

(VII) PROMPT A VOTER TO SELECT FROM THE OPTIONS FOR EACH CONTEST OR QUESTION, ONE CONTEST OR QUESTION AT A TIME, IN THE SAME ORDER AS PRINTED ON THE PRINTED BALLOT, AND CONFIRM THE VOTER'S VOTE FOR EACH CONTEST OR QUESTION ON THE BALLOT;

(VIII) ENCRYPT THE RESULTS OF THE VOTED BALLOT ON
CONFIRMATION BY THE VOTER THAT THE VOTER HAS FINISHED VOTING;

(IX) STORE VOTED BALLOTS IN AN AIR-GAPPED, REMEMBERING,
NON-INTERNET CONNECTED SYSTEM;

(X) PRINT VOTED BALLOTS INTO A SCANNABLE PAPER BALLOT
OR BE TRANSCRIBED IN THE SAME MANNER AS ABSENTEE BALLOTS PROVIDED BY
THE INTERNET;

(XI) BE ACCESSIBLE THROUGH A TOLL-FREE NUMBER; AND

(XII) PROHIBIT A VOTER FROM CASTING MORE THAN ONE
BALLOT.

(2) THE STATE BOARD MAY NOT CERTIFY A TELEPHONE VOTING
SYSTEM UNLESS:

(I) THE TELEPHONE VOTING SYSTEM HAS BEEN:

1. EXAMINED BY AN INDEPENDENT TESTING
LABORATORY THAT IS APPROVED BY THE U.S. ELECTION ASSISTANCE
COMMISSION; AND

2. SHOWN BY THE TESTING LABORATORY TO MEET THE
PERFORMANCE AND TEST STANDARDS FOR VOTING SYSTEMS ESTABLISHED BY THE
FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION OR THE U.S. ELECTION ASSISTANCE
COMMISSION; AND

(II) THE PUBLIC INTEREST WILL BE SERVED BY THE
CERTIFICATION OF THE VOTING SYSTEM.

(D) A VOTE CAST THROUGH THE TELEPHONE VOTING SYSTEM SHALL BE
CANVASSED WITH OTHER ABSENTEE BALLOTS.

(E) (1) A VOTER IS ELIGIBLE TO USE THE TELEPHONE VOTING SYSTEM IF
THE VOTER SUBMITS A FORM TO THE STATE BOARD ATTESTING THAT THE
INDIVIDUAL HAS A PRINT DISABILITY.

(2) A VOTER WHO SUBMITS A PROPER FORM UNDER PARAGRAPH (1)
OF THIS SUBSECTION SHALL BE PLACED ON THE TELEPHONE VOTING SYSTEM LIST
BY THE STATE BOARD.

(F) (1) NOT LESS THAN 75 DAYS BEFORE THE DAY ON WHICH A LOCAL BOARD BEGINS TO SEND ABSENTEE BALLOTS TO VOTERS, THE STATE BOARD SHALL SEND A WRITTEN COMMUNICATION, USING AN ACCESSIBLE FORMAT CHOSEN BY THE VOTER, TO EACH VOTER WHO IS ON THE TELEPHONE VOTING SYSTEM LIST.

(2) THE COMMUNICATION REQUIRED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION SHALL INCLUDE:

(I) CONFIRMATION THAT THE VOTER IS ON THE TELEPHONE VOTING SYSTEM LIST;

(II) THE TOLL-FREE TELEPHONE NUMBER THAT THE VOTER MAY USE TO ACCESS THE TELEPHONE VOTING SYSTEM;

(III) THE DATES DURING WHICH THE VOTER MAY ACCESS THE TELEPHONE VOTING SYSTEM;

(IV) CREDENTIALS TO AUTHENTICATE THE VOTER'S IDENTITY;

(V) INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO USE THE TELEPHONE VOTING SYSTEM; AND

(VI) CONTACT INFORMATION FOR VOTER ASSISTANCE.

(G) THE STATE BOARD SHALL DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A VOTER EDUCATION CAMPAIGN TO PROVIDE INFORMATION TO THE PUBLIC, AND SPECIFICALLY VOTERS WITH A PRINT DISABILITY, OF THE AVAILABILITY OF THE TELEPHONE VOTING SYSTEM.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, on or before December 1, 2028, the State Board of Elections shall report to the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee and the House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee, in accordance with § 2–1257 of the State Government Article, on:

(1) the telephone voting system selected and certified by the State Board in accordance with § 9–102.1 of the Election Law Article, as enacted by Section 1 of this Act;

(2) the status and timeline for fully implementing the telephone voting system;

(3) the cost of acquiring, administering, and implementing the telephone voting system;

1 (4) the status of the voter education campaign required under § 9–102.1(g)
2 of the Election Law Article, as enacted by Section 1 of this Act; and

3 (5) projections on the number of voters who may be eligible to use the
4 telephone voting system.

5 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
6 January 1, 2027.