



**Testimony for the Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs
Committee
April 1, 2021**

HB 1047 Mail-In Voting Enhancement Act

FAVORABLE

Due to the global pandemic and our shared efforts to flatten the curve, there was an unprecedented rise in mail in voting. This resulted in emergency measures by the State Board of Elections to strengthen mail in voting throughout Maryland which was largely successful. HB 1047 seeks to codify the emergency measures of mail in voting instituted during the last election cycle and improve upon them. HB 1047 creates an avenue to diversify voting methods and increase civic participation, a hallmark of democracy. Additionally, HB 1047 will provide voters with peace of mind through real time ballot tracking, which will solidify faith in our election system and ensure it is working as intended. This bill also provides for ballot curing, allowing voters to correct their ballots if there are issues reducing the amount of rejected ballots. Opportunities for voters to correct their ballots ensures that their votes and voices are counted and heard. There are multiple avenues a voter can be contacted to correct a ballot, including an accessible web portal, ensuring Marylanders with disabilities have an opportunity to correct their ballots. Drop boxes do not require paid postage, which will reduce costs that can be allocated for improving security measures such as surveillance cameras or physical surveillance of drop boxes, if needed.

HB 1047 is a dynamic piece of legislation that increases equitable access to voting for all Marylanders, which is necessary for our democracy to continue to work. For these reasons, the ACLU of Maryland urges a favorable report for HB 1047.

SAMUELA ANSAH
PUBLIC POLICY INTERN

AMERICAN CIVIL
LIBERTIES UNION
OF MARYLAND

MAIN OFFICE
& MAILING ADDRESS
3600 CLIPPER MILL ROAD
SUITE 350
BALTIMORE, MD 21211
T/410-889-8555
or 240-274-5295
F/410-366-7838

WWW.ACLU-MD.ORG

COLEMAN BAZELON
PRESIDENT

SUSAN GOERING
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ANDREW FREEMAN
GENERAL COUNSEL