



Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

EMPOWERMENT • OPPORTUNITY • INCLUSION

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
HB 1047: Mail-In Voting Enhancement Act
April 1, 2021
Position: Support

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council (DD Council) is an independent, public policy organization that works to improve policies, programs and services that support people with developmental disabilities and their families in our communities. The DD Council is led by people with developmental disabilities and their families. From that perspective, **the DD Council supports HB 1047** which requires at least 300 ballot drop boxes be available statewide, ensures trackable ballots and enhances a voters' ability to cure their ballot.

WHY is this legislation important?

- Voting is a fundamental right that Maryland's citizens with developmental disabilities want and need to participate in.
- All of Maryland's voters must be able to access their fundamental right to vote simply.
- There can be many barriers to voting for a person with a disability, access to the ballot by accessible ballot boxes reduces those barriers significantly.
- Helps ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Help America Vote Act.

WHAT does this legislation do?

- Establishes provisions governing availability, location, and other aspects of ballot drop boxes
- Gives voters access to absentee ballot instructions and status information
- Enhances a voter's ability to correct a problem with the voter's absentee ballot.
- Requires the State Board of Elections to complete reports on the usability of mail-in ballot materials following each election.

The additional access to the ballot afforded by HB 1047 is essential so people with developmental disabilities maintain their fundamental right to vote.

Contact: Keith Walmsley, Director of Public Policy Initiatives
kwalmsley@md-council.org