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BILL NO.: **SB 283**

TITLE: Student and Military Voter Empowerment Act

SPONSOR: Senator Elfreth

COMMITTEE: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

DATE: February 4, 2021

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 283 – Student and Military Voter Empowerment Act. This legislation would make voting more accessible to overseas military, students, and other eligible voters.

Every citizen of the State of Maryland deserves to have their voice heard through the democratic process. This means that information for voter registration, voting locations, and other organizational processes should be as accessible as possible. This is especially important for young, newly eligible voters who register and begin voting early to ensure lifelong participation in this democratic process.

This legislation would help make many of the organizational processes around voting more accessible to all. It would enable overseas military members to digitally register and request an absentee ballot via the federal post card application. SB 283 would also improve access for student eligibility by requiring public higher education institutions to hire a student voting coordinator to implement campus voting plans. In addition, this bill requires the board of election to more explicitly explain the requirements of students voting within the state. Finally, SB 283 requires local board of elections to consult with large residential institutional communities when deciding where to locate polling places. These measures will make voting easier and accessible to all.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 283. For more information, please contact Chuck Conner, Director of Government Affairs at cconner@baltimorecountymd.gov.