

JHEANELLE WILKINS  
Legislative District 20  
Montgomery County

PARLIAMENTARIAN

Ways and Means Committee



The Maryland House of Delegates  
6 Bladen Street, Room 350  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3493 · 301-858-3493  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3493  
Fax 410-841-3445 · 301-858-3445  
Jheanelle.Wilkins@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

April 1, 2021

**House Bill 1047 Mail-In Voting Enhancement Act**

Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to present **House Bill 1047 Mail-In Voting Enhancement Act**, which makes improvements to our current mail-in voting system by establishing provisions governing the availability and location of ballot drop boxes, absentee ballot instructions, voter access to absentee ballot application and absentee ballot status information, a voter's ability to correct a problem with their absentee ballot, and the information reported after each statewide election.

This General Assembly has worked to expand the use of ballot drop-boxes in the state, making voting more accessible and safe for all Marylanders. In 2020, we saw a record number of voters around the country, and the ability to vote safely was critical amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. HB 1047 provides reforms to strengthen our mail-in voting process to ensure every registered voter in the state can exercise their right to safely vote.

Specifically, HB 1047 requires at least 300 ballot drop boxes for future statewide elections; ensures voters have access to an absentee ballot application and absentee ballot status information online, including when an absentee ballot is sent to the voter, when it is received by the local board, and when it is counted; and creates a process for ballot curing so voters have the opportunity to correct their absentee ballot before it is rejected because they failed to sign the oath. This bill also requires the State Board of Elections to complete a comprehensive report after the election to assess voter turnout, updated policies and practices, and improvements for future elections.

When accessible to everyone, drop boxes are a highly popular option with voters and increase voter participation. For these reasons, I urge the committee to give a favorable report for **House Bill 1047**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jheanelle Wilkins".

Delegate Jheanelle Wilkins,