

SB 838 - Voter ID - Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Ennis, Ella

Position: FAV

The Honorable Paul Pinsky, Chairman
And Members of the
Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee
Senate of Maryland
Annapolis, Maryland

RE: SB 838- Require Voter ID – FAVORABLE

Dear Chairman Pinsky and Committee Members,

SB 838- to require a voter to provide ID when voting is common-sense and insurance against fraud and mistakes in checking in voters. Showing a government-issued ID gives everyone confidence that votes cast in an election are cast by actual registered voters. This bill provides numerous options for providing the identification to verify the voter is the person listed in the voter registry.

At a recent election in Calvert County for example there was a situation where two women with the same first and last names, who lived in separate precincts, each went to vote. The first at early voting and the second on election day. The second person was told she had already voted at early voting, and when she maintained she had not voted early she was allowed to vote a provisional ballot. This voter was highly upset. Only because the first woman had included her middle initial when she signed the voting slip were the elections board able to verify that the 2nd woman had not voted early. Had voters been required to show a government issued identification the election judge would have checked off the correct person at early voting.

You cannot enter a government building, get on an airplane, open a bank account, receive social security without verifying your identification, you should show ID to vote – our most precious right under the US and Maryland Constitutions.

Please give SB 838 a Favorable Report.

Sincerely,
Ella Ennis
P.O. Box 437
Port Republic, MD 20676
E-mail: eee437@comcast.net

NFINK-D32-SUPPORTSB838.pdf

Uploaded by: Fink, Nelda

Position: FAV

Written Testimony in FAVOR of SB 838 – Election Law – Polling Places – Proof of Identity

Nelda Fink, 8372 Norwood Dr, Millersville

MD District 32

Honorable Senator Pinsky - Chair, Honorable Senator Kagan - Vice Chair, Honorable committee members,

I completely support and am in favor of SB 838. Every time I walk in to a polling place, I have my ID right there all ready to go. I was surprised to learn this past year that we don't even have a law requiring it. Passing this bill will be one of many great changes to help make elections in Maryland fair and accurate, and credible. We need more positive election system changes like this one. Please support this bill!

Sincerely,

Nelda Fink, 8372 Norwood Dr, Millersville

MD District 32

SB 838 – Election Law – Polling Places – Proof of Identity - APPROVE

SB 838.pdf

Uploaded by: Paul, Ellen

Position: FAV

SB 838 – Election Law – Polling Places – Proof of Identity

Support

Testimony 3/3/2021

I support SB 838 because requiring an ID to establish you are who you say you are is fundamental to the voting process. I feel that I am disenfranchised unless all voters can show an approved document that establishes who they are and where they reside.

Ellen Paul

Rockville, Maryland

SB838VoterID.pdf

Uploaded by: Ready, Justin

Position: FAV



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony in Support of SB 838 - Election Law – Polling Places – Proof of Identity

March 3, 2021

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

Chairman Pinsky and member of the Education, Health, and Environment Committee,

Senate Bill 838 is common sense legislation that would require voter identification to cast a ballot but expands the types of identification that can be used beyond driver's license or state photo ID to a number of proofs of identity.

Senate Bill 838 expands the definition of voter ID to include a utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or any other government document; a voter notification card; or the specimen ballot mailed to the voter by a local board,

Over thirty states have some form of voter ID requirement to vote in person. With trust in elections at a low ebb, this simple step to verify a voter's identity helps ensure a one-person-one-vote system and cuts down even on human errors. Maryland has had cases in the recent past of people registered in multiple states voting in both, and, anecdotally I have had constituents experience situations where someone in another county checked off their name in a poll book by mistake – causing them to have to fill out a provisional ballot.

Particularly as we move more and more to voting at early vote centers and allow for people to vote at any polling place, having a simple ID check will not just verify that fraud isn't taking place but also help eliminate human error. SB 838 can give voters more confidence that all who vote do so legally.

I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 838.

SB838 testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Waterman, Diana

Position: FAV



MARYLAND FEDERATION of *Republican Women*

The Honorable Paul Pinsky, Chairman, and Members, Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

RE: SB838 - FAVORABLE

Dear Senators:

On behalf of the more than 1300 members of the Maryland Federation of Republican Women (MFRW), representing citizens from across Maryland, I am writing to ask you for a Favorable Report on SB 838.

We believe this bill preserves and respects the rights of all registered voters. Requiring a voter to present a photo ID (or other approved document) protects the integrity of every voters' vote. Currently, anyone who knows a registered voter's name, address, and month/day of birth can vote as that person on a regular ballot. When an individual votes on a regular ballot, it is permanent. There is no way to remove this vote once it has been cast. By requiring a voter to present photo ID (or other approved document), the integrity of the election is preserved.

Those who oppose requiring Voter ID often cite that not all voters have photo ID and that obtaining an acceptable form of ID is difficult for these people. We believe this bill addresses many of those concerns. An individual who does not have photo ID can still prove their identity through a bank statement, utility bill, paycheck, or similar document. Even if an individual still cannot prove their identity through one of these means, he or she may still vote but will use a provisional ballot. These ballots are reviewed after election day. If the voter is found to be eligible, then the vote is counted. If not, the vote is not counted. No other voter's vote is affected. The rights of all are preserved.

Therefore, the members of the Maryland Federation of Republican Women request a Favorable Report for SB838.

Thank you,

Diana D Waterman

Diana Waterman
President, Maryland Federation of Republican Women
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410-490-0227
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SB 838 - Election Law – Polling Places – Proof of

Uploaded by: Antoine, Joanne

Position: UNF

March 3, 2021

Testimony on SB 838
Election Law – Polling Places – Proof of Identity
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Position: Unfavorable

Common Cause Maryland opposes SB 838, which would require proof of identity to vote.

Voting is celebrated as the most fundamental form of civic participation in a democracy, a means by which all voices are counted on an equal basis. Restrictive photo identification requirements undermine this goal because they prevent eligible voters from participating, impose enormous and unjustified costs on states, and do not achieve the goals they claim to work towards.

Studies show that those without ID are disproportionately likely to be Black, Latino, low-income voters, young adults, senior citizens, and people with disabilities. For many of these eligible persons, it is no simple matter to obtain the necessary ID — the hurdles involved can make doing so difficult, and in some cases, impossible.

Having a certified copy of one's birth certificate is a prerequisite to obtaining identification from a DMV. However, many people do not have their birth certificate, have lost it, or never had one in the first place. Given that a driver's license is the most typical form of ID required to vote, it stands to reason that citizens without identification do not necessarily have an easy way to physically get to the offices they need to go to in order to get ID. And even can travel be arranged, the limited hours of service many DMVs provide, combined with long waits at the DMV, creates a third barrier for obtaining identification.

The risk of disenfranchisement is far greater than the evidence of voter fraud in Maryland. Millions of citizens residing in states with these restrictive laws do not currently possess the requisite photo ID needed to vote. And while there is anecdotal evidence of voter fraud, there is no proof that fraud is occurring on a scale that would necessitate this type of measure — or outweigh its risks.

SB 838 would roll back basic protections that allow all registered voters to engage in our democratic process, and we urge an unfavorable report.

2021-03-03 SB 838 (Oppose).pdf

Uploaded by: Jung, Roy

Position: UNF

BRIAN E. FROSH
Attorney General



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STATE OF MARYLAND
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

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March 3, 2021

TO: The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.
Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Hannibal G. Williams II Kemerer
Chief Counsel, Legislative Affairs, The Office of the Attorney General

RE: SB0838 – Election Law – Polling Places – Proof of Identity – **Letter of
Opposition**

The Office of Attorney General (the “OAG”) urges this Committee to unfavorably report SB 838.

Senate Bill 838 seeks to require election judges to establish a voter’s identity and verify the voter’s address prior to permitting the voter to cast a regular ballot. Voter ID requirements have historically served to disenfranchise the elderly, people of limited means, and people of color.¹ Maryland law should seek to expand the franchise to as many eligible citizens as possible, not to constrict the franchise to only those individuals with ID and proof of address.

For the foregoing reasons, the Office of the Attorney General urges an unfavorable report on SB 838.

cc: Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee
Senators Ready, Bailey, Corderman, Eckardt, Edwards, Gallion, Hershey, Hough,
Jennings, Salling, Simonaire, and West

¹ Sari Horwitz, Getting a Photo ID So You Can Vote is Easy. Unless You’re Poor, Black, Latino or Elderly, Wash. Post (May 23, 2016), available online at: https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/courts_law/getting-a-photo-id-so-you-can-vote-is-easy-unless-youre-poor-black-latino-or-elderly/2016/05/23/8d5474ec-20f0-11e6-8690-f14ca9de2972_story.html (last visited Mar. 1, 2021); see also, Issie Lapowsky, A Dead-Simple Algorithm Reveals the True Toll of Voter ID Laws, Wired (Jan. 4, 2018), available online at: https://www.wired.com/story/voter-id-law-algorithm/?utm_medium=twitter&utm_source=dvr.it (last visited Mar. 1, 2021).

MAP - SB 838 - Voter Id - Unfavorable.pdf

Uploaded by: Klingenmaier, Lisa

Position: UNF



Member Agencies:

Advocates for Children and Youth
Baltimore Jewish Council
Behavioral Health System Baltimore
CASH Campaign of Maryland
Catholic Charities
Episcopal Diocese of Maryland
Family League of Baltimore
Fuel Fund of Maryland
Health Care for the Homeless
Homeless Persons
Representation Project
Job Opportunities Task Force
League of Women Voters of Maryland
Loyola University Maryland
Maryland Catholic Conference
Maryland Center on Economic Policy
Maryland Community Action
Partnership
Maryland Family Network
Maryland Hunger Solutions
Mental Health Association of
Maryland
Paul's Place
Public Justice Center
St. Vincent de Paul of Baltimore
Welfare Advocates

Marylanders Against Poverty

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Julia Gross, Co-Chair
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TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION OF SB 838

Election Law – Polling Places – Proof of Identity

Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee

March 3, 2021

Submitted by Stacey Jefferson and Julia Gross, Co-Chairs

Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP) strongly opposes SB 838, which would require the identity of voters to be verified via current government-issued photo identification, certain government documents with an address, a voter notification card, or sample ballot mailed to the voter.

SB 838 is unnecessary. SB 838 is a solution to a non-existent problem. The most comprehensive national study on instances of voter fraud found there were only 2,068 alleged election-fraud cases since 2000 – and only ten of these cases were in-person voter fraud. The majority of the fraud cases were related to absentee ballots and registration errors – things that would not be addressed by voter ID laws. Of the 2,068 cases, only two of the alleged cases were in Maryland and neither was in-person voter fraud.¹

SB 838 will disproportionately affect communities of color, women, and seniors. A study out of Harvard and Tufts Universities found that Black voters are still more likely to lack adequate identification to vote under voter ID laws, concluding there is clear racial disparity on voting rights.² This complements the study conducted by the Brennan Center which found that 11% of voting-age United States citizens do not have current and valid photo ID and that the percentage was even higher for low-income individuals (15%), minorities (25%), and the elderly (18%).³ Another recent study conducted after the proliferation of voter ID laws in other states demonstrated that voter ID laws depresses Latino turnout by 9.3 points, Black and African American turnout by 8.6 points, and Asian American turnout by 12.5 points.⁴ To quote the study, “we find that voter identification laws do, in fact, substantially alter the makeup of who votes and ultimately do skew democracy in favor of whites [...] Voter ID laws may represent one of the Nation’s most important civil rights issues.”⁵

SB 838 will disenfranchise individuals experiencing homelessness. Keeping personal identification safe and secure without stable housing is nearly impossible; people often become the victims of theft or their documents deteriorate when exposed to the elements. Institutions such as hospitals, jails, and shelters often discard all of an individual’s belongings – including identifying documentation. A person leaving a domestic violence situation may not be able to retrieve important documents. Although SB 383 does allow for sample ballots, government documents, and voter notification cards to count as identification, individuals that experience homelessness do not often have an addresses where such mail can be delivered and accessed reliably. Regarding the list of accepted government documentation, many individuals living in poverty – and especially those experiencing homelessness – often do not have utility bills, pay stubs, and other such documents. Ultimately, SB 838 would create significant barriers to voting - especially for the most vulnerable Marylanders.

SB 838 is costly. In order to inform voters of the changes in required documentation needed to vote, past fiscal notes indicates it would cost upwards of \$500,000 just for

voter outreach for one year. That does not include the additional provisional ballots that would need to be printed, or the need to hire additional election judges in order to properly implement the voter identification requirement in populated jurisdictions. Moreover, most of the states with voter ID laws are facing expensive legal challenges, and through litigation several state laws have been overturned.⁶ As Maryland struggles with a difficult budget, inserting an expensive new voting requirement - when there is no research to indicate widespread in-person voter fraud exists - is a grossly inefficient use of State resources.

SB 838 creates an excessive – and unwarranted – barrier to the constitutional right to vote. Marylanders living in or near poverty are already economically disenfranchised, and SB 838 will generate voter disenfranchisement for Marylanders who lack proper identification and the means to obtain required documentation for voting. The right to vote is central to our democracy; therefore, it must be protected. Any initiative that might disenfranchise eligible voters must meet the highest burden of proof. This bill cannot meet that burden.

MAP appreciates your consideration and urges the committee to issue an unfavorable report for SB 838.

Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP) is a coalition of service providers, faith communities, and advocacy organizations advancing statewide public policies and programs necessary to alleviate the burdens faced by Marylanders living in or near poverty, and to address the underlying systemic causes of poverty.

¹ Khan & Carson. (2012). Comprehensive Database of U.S. Voter Fraud Uncovers No Evidence That Photo Id Is Needed. "Who Can Vote? Project." News21. Retrieved from <http://votingrights.news21.com/article/election-fraud/>

² A Dead Simple Algorithm Reveals the True Toll of Voter ID Laws. January 2018. <https://www.wired.com/story/voter-id-law-algorithm/>

³ Brennan Center for Justice. (2006). "Citizens Without Proof". Retrieved from <http://www.brennancenter.org/analysis/citizens-without-proof>

⁴ Hajnal, Z., Lajevardi, N., and Nielson, L. (2016). *Voter Identification Laws and the Suppression of Minority Votes*. University of California at San Diego. <http://pages.ucsd.edu/~zhajnal/page5/documents/voterIDhajnaletal.pdf>

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ National Conference of State Legislatures. (2014, May). *Voter ID in the Courts: An Introduction to legal challenges to voter ID laws*. http://www.ncsl.org/documents/legismgt/elect/Voter_ID_Courts_May2014.pdf

SB 838 Voter ID.pdf

Uploaded by: Walmsley, Keith

Position: UNF



Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

EMPOWERMENT • OPPORTUNITY • INCLUSION

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee SB 838: Election Law – Polling Places – Proof of Identity March 3, 2021 Position: Opposed

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 opposes SB 838 which may disenfranchise many eligible voters who do not have government issued photo identification.

WHY do we oppose this legislation?

- Voting is a fundamental right that Maryland's citizens with disabilities want and need to participate in.
- People with developmental disabilities are the least likely to own a car and possess a driver's license, which is the most common form of identification.
- Federal law guarantees the right to vote to a person with a developmental disability who understands what it means to vote, yet access remains a problem for voters with disabilities.
- Requiring a government issued photo identification card or other documentation creates an additional barrier to voting and is not needed to address any documented problem.

WHAT does this legislation do?

- Requires an election judge to establish a voter's identity by requiring the voter to present a photo ID or other proof of identity.
- Requires a voter to vote a provisional ballot if the voter is unable to provide certain proof of identity.
- Prohibits a person from knowingly and willfully voting or attempting to vote under a false form of identification.

The reality is that there is no substantial evidence of widespread fraud by voters who actually come to the polls to vote. Federal laws such as the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 were enacted to make voting easier and increase voter participation.

SB 838 creates a burden for people with developmental disabilities and creates an additional barrier to entire group of people to exercise their fundamental right to vote. Therefore, **the DD Council opposes.**

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

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Kalani Brown, *Chairperson* • Rachel London, Esq., *Executive Director*