

MARY L. WASHINGTON, PH.D
Legislative District 43
Baltimore City

Education, Health, and
Environmental Affairs Committee

Chair
Joint Committee on Ending
Homelessness

Chair
Joint Committee on Children,
Youth, and Families



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
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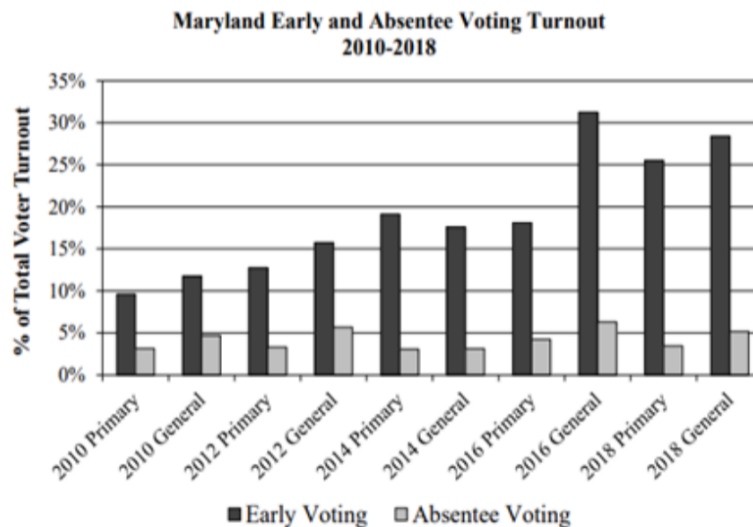
SUPPORT – SB 596
Election Law - Early Voting Centers –
Hours of Operation
House Ways & Means Committee
March 23, 2021
Testimony of Senator Mary Washington

Chair Kaiser, Vice-Chair Washington and Members of the Committee,

I respectfully urge you to vote favorably on Senate Bill 596, which will require Maryland Early Voting Centers to open at 7:00am during non-general elections.

Currently, Early Voting Centers open at 8:00am during presidential general elections, but cannot open earlier than 10:00am for any other election. The 10:00am start time presents a problem for many voters, particularly those who want to vote on their way to work.

As you can see in the chart below, voter turnout for primary elections has risen dramatically in Maryland since 2010. By opening Early Voting Centers three hours earlier for these elections, we will build on our recent efforts to expand voter access and decrease wait times to vote.



This bill is a simple fix that will permanently increase the opportunity for all Marylanders to participate in our democracy.

For these reasons, I ask you for a favorable report on SB 596.

In partnership,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mary Washington". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Senator Mary Washington, District 43, Baltimore City