



**Testimony for the House Ways and Means Committee
January 19, 2021**

CAYLIN YOUNG
PUBLIC POLICY DIRECTOR

**HB 245 – Election Judges - Training and Signs
Accommodations for Voters in Need of Assistance**

SUPPORT

The ACLU of Maryland supports HB 245 which creates a requirement that the State Election Board develops and uses training materials for election judges which provides instructions on how election judges can assist or accommodate elderly and disabled voters at a polling site.

The vote is the defining act of citizenship. As a democracy, we should encourage all eligible voters to avail themselves of the franchise. And in so doing, we should make the act of voting itself available to all eligible voters. Ensuring election judges are properly trained in assisting our seniors and those with disabilities is critical to this goal.

The legislation also requires that the State Board develop a sign which will be posted prominently at the entrance of each polling place to inform these same voters of the availability of the aforementioned assistance. This is just as critically necessary as the prerequisite training for election judges. Voters must be able to understand how to exercise their right to vote and the resources available to them to make that process accessible.

We are especially excited that this bill will be creating better equity in our voting process and protecting the right to cast a secret ballot. The ACLU of Maryland supports enabling more people to access the franchise.

For the foregoing reasons, the ACLU of Maryland supports HB 245.

AMERICAN CIVIL
LIBERTIES UNION
OF MARYLAND

MAIN OFFICE
& MAILING ADDRESS
3600 CLIPPER MILL ROAD
SUITE 350
BALTIMORE, MD 21211
T/410-889-8555
or 240-274-5295
F/410-366-7838

WWW.ACLU-MD.ORG

COLEMAN BAZELON
PRESIDENT

DANA VICKERS SHELLEY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ANDREW FREEMAN
GENERAL COUNSEL