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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE  
IN SUPPORT OF HB 1038 – STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS –  
MEMBERSHIP, CONTRACT MANAGEMENT, BALLOT DROP BOXES, AND  
VOTING SYSTEM FINANCING**

March 9, 2021

Get Money Out (GMOM) is an all-volunteer organization that was established just over eight years ago. We now have signed up more than 9,000 citizen supporters. We work in Maryland towards the goal that all citizens should have equal access to the ballot and an equal say in governance.

**HB 1038** contains a number of important reforms in light of recent experience.

- Assures that critical expertise in terms of diversity, disabilities, cybersecurity, and procurement is present among the membership of the Board.
- Adds a valuable perspective by making the President of the Maryland Association of Election Officials an *ex officio* Board member.
- Provides for Board oversight and final approval of all procurement contracts exceeding \$50,000. There have been high-scrutiny contracts in recent years that would have been subject to such oversight, including one involving a contract for voter database management in which a vendor was later purchased by a foreign national, and another involving a dispute with the printer for the ballots during the Spring of 2020.
- Restricts reporting of funding sources as “special funds” so that clarity will be available to the Board regarding cost-sharing between the State and local governments.
- Restricts the local share of certain expenses to 50%. We heartily endorse this provision because higher cost burdens on lower-wealth jurisdictions can be a factor in creating shortages of personal or equipment that might lead to long waiting times and other disincentives to vote among lower-income and minority populations.
- Defines ballot drop box and restricts unauthorized persons from representing any ballot collection device as “official.”

These proposed reforms make good sense. It is especially important during the current financial crisis to limit any unplanned and unaffordable expenses for local governments. Protecting the local governments in this way will avoid situations that could compromise citizens’ right to vote. Please issue a favorable report on **HB 1038**.