



330 N. Howard Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
(410) 576-1400
www.plannedparenthood.org/maryland

Planned Parenthood of Maryland

Committee: House Ways and Means Committee
Bill Number: House Bill 1048
Title: Election Law - Permanent Absentee Ballot List
Hearing: February 23, 2021
Position: Support

Planned Parenthood of Maryland supports *House Bill 1048 – Election Law - Permanent Absentee Ballot List*. This bill will require the State Board of Elections to provide a permanent absentee ballot list and allow for a more clear and accessible voting process.

In addition to being the top provider of reproductive health care in the state, Planned Parenthood of Maryland (PPM) has built a robust outreach program. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, PPM registered voters in all of its health center waiting rooms and at more than 100 community events per year.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, PPM joined the Everyone Votes MD coalition in reaching out to voters to provide registration and ballot access information. Patients and community members faced uncertainty in 2020 around their status as mail-in voters or in-person voters. Voters PPM spoke with who requested mail-in ballots for the primary were often uncertain of their mail-in status for the general election.

A permanent list with clear regulations on how to remain on the list or leave the list—as HB 1048 provides—will ease participation for voters, reassure voters so they know whether to expect a mail-in ballot, and also create a clearer path to assisting first-time voters for coalitions such as Everyone Votes MD and ensuring Marylanders make their voices heard.

We ask for a favorable vote on this legislation. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Robyn Elliott at (443) 926-3443 or relliott@policypartners.net.