

The Honorable Anne Kaiser
And Members of the
Ways and Means Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
Annapolis, Maryland

RE: HB 341 – Absentee Ballot Canvass to start 14 days prior to Election - OPPOSE

Dear Chairman Kaiser and Committee Members,

I oppose Elections by Mail and counting of ballots 2 weeks prior to the Election.

Counting votes over two weeks is much less secure than counting votes on election day. It is more susceptible to manipulation or leakage of the total votes a candidate may have received while ballots are still being mailed. It is very difficult for volunteer vote-poll watchers to be present for 14 days. During the 2020 election poll watchers were excluded from the mail-in ballot counting. This should not be repeated.

When a voter votes at their Polling Place on Election Day or during Early Voting their ballot is completely secret and their ability to vote for the candidates of their choice is protected. They know their ballot is counted because they place the ballot in the collator. They have no such assurance with an election by mail and counting votes over 3 or more weeks.

Marylanders expect to know election results on election night or the following day. Delays in vote tabulations for days or weeks reduces confidence in the election results. In-person voting on Election Day with all voting precincts open results in fast tabulation of the votes on Election Day and a manageable number of Absentee Ballots that can be counted in one or two days.

Please give HB 341 an Unfavorable Report.

Sincerely,
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