

REPRESENT MARYLAND

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BILL: HB0493

BILL TITLE: Election Law – Voting Locations – Accessibility by Public Transportation and Voters With Disabilities

BILL SPONSOR: Delegate Guyton

COMMITTEE: Ways and Means

POSITION: FAVORABLE

HEARING DATE: February 2, 2020

TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF HB0493

Crystal Peters, Volunteer
Represent Maryland

Thank you to the committee for hearing HB0493 and to Delegate Guyton for introducing the bill. I am a volunteer with Represent Maryland, an all volunteer, grassroots group who fights for democracy at the local and state level, and one of the issues we work on is equitable voter access.

The year 2020 was a wild ride that taught me a lot of lessons. One of the things that I was reminded of is the importance of protecting everyone's right to vote. While we all know that voting is a 'civic duty' many people do not think about what the voting experience of others who are different from them is like. This year, I was reminded that not all voters have the same easy experience that I do when casting my vote. There are a lot of voters for whom voting is a burden, because their needs for access aren't considered. Imagine being told voting is your civic duty but then having literal physical barriers to casting your vote?

I, and Represent Maryland, believe that we must continually work to break down barriers to voting and consistently consider whether our current rules and laws are inclusive of everyone. This bill will correct some oversights and make voting more accessible to all. By putting polling places within 500 feet from public transportation and making sure that drop boxes are accessible by wheelchair, it will ease the burden of exercising the right to vote on many of our fellow members of society.

We hope the committee will find this non-controversial bill favorable and move it to the house floor for a vote.

Sincerely,
Crystal Peters
Volunteer
Represent Maryland
Voter, LD42B

Represent Maryland is a grassroots anti-corruption group of citizen advocates that #FightForDemocracy in Maryland. Our democracy solutions include: Public Election Funds, Independent Redistricting, Special Elections, Ranked Choice Voting, Increased Ethics and Transparency, and Increased Voter Participation.

Learn more about our work at www.RepresentMaryland.org

Authorized by Represent Maryland PAC, T. Miller, Treasurer