

I strongly oppose Bill 274:

Voters' Lists in all jurisdictions are not updated regularly. There are many names on the voters' lists that are no longer eligible including those who have moved out of the district or out of state; those who have died or become ineligible for other reasons. Mass-mailed Ballots are subject to being "harvested" by removing them from mail boxes or from trash cans. Harvesting groups can unfairly pressure voters, particularly elderly or young voters to vote for a specific candidate or slate of candidates or to allow them to return the ballots.

When a voter votes at their Precinct 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. U.S. Mail delivery has become less reliable and millions of "mail-in" ballots will flood the system and put delivery of ballots at risk.

Marylanders expect to know election results on election night or at least by the next day. Delays in vote tabulations for weeks reduces confidence in the election results. The canvassing of ballots in elections-by-mail is prolonged over weeks. It is much less secure and more susceptible to manipulation or leakage of the total votes a candidate may have received while ballots are still being mailed.

Maryland has long had poll-watchers observe the vote counting for absentee ballots. It is very difficult to have volunteer poll-watchers observe vote counting over several weeks.

In-person elections at polling places on one Election Day have worked for hundreds of years. The system isn't broken and doesn't need to be "fixed".