



## Testimony of The National Vote at Home Coalition

### In Support of Maryland's HB 1047

Thank you Chair Kaiser and committee members for the opportunity to to submit testimony in support of HB 1047. The National Vote at Home Coalition is pleased to join local leaders in support of this measure with technical amendments and are grateful for your time and attention.

After their debut last year, voters and election officials have spoken: drop boxes were a massive success. It's not a wonder why: research<sup>1</sup> has shown that mail voters who vote by drop box are more confident that their vote will reach officials in time to be counted. Drop boxes can also save the state significant expense by dramatically reducing the amount spent on return postage for ballots.

We are grateful that the sponsor has been considering ways to make sure that the distribution of boxes is equitable, that they are ADA compliant and that the boxes are in service 30 days before the election. These basic access considerations are important to make sure that all voters have the options they need to make sure that their voices are heard.

We are also very supportive of the processes prescribed by this bill to create transparency in the process for voters, but also accountability for elections officials. Giving voters the ability to see basic information about the status of their ballot is an excellent way to increase the confidence of the electorate and increase participation.

Last year in an effort to reduce rejected ballots the state worked hard to implement some temporary processes and to create a robust cure process, no doubt contributing to Maryland's incredible progress of decreasing its ballot rejection rate by more than 45% since 2016.<sup>2</sup> This bill codifies that cure process into law, notifying voters when a correctable error is found with their ballot and giving them the chance to fix it.

We stand ready to assist however possible to offer some technical amendments to make sure the details of these reforms work as intended. Maryland has made great strides in expanding access and

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<sup>1</sup> 2018 paper [Do Drop Boxes Improve Voter Turnout? Evidence from King County, Washington](#)

<sup>2</sup> Based on 2020 ballot rejection rate of 0.24% (from rejected [mail](#), [provisional](#), and [total turnout](#)) and 2016 ballot rejection rate of 0.47% (from [EAVS](#) data ((B13a+E1d+C4b) / F1a))

# **VOTE** **HOME**

options to voters and we urge this committee to support HB 1047 with technical amendments to codify and build upon the successes of 2020's election reforms.