

Testimony opposing HB 274 – Mail In Ballots to all registered voters – Ways & Means- January 26, 2021

If voting laws deemed unfair or outcomes deemed unfair by many voters, then Maryland might as well be a dictatorship. In fact, many will not vote because they will not think their votes count.

This bill is very much like HB 153, but a voter can decide not to vote by mail, toss the ballot away, and vote by another means. This just adds to the counting confusion because some ballots, having been taken out of a mailbox, may have been voted, so that when the voter goes to vote in person, he/she finds that some may have voted in his/her name.

1. Bill provides for ballots to be mailed to all registered voters. It is known that county and city vote lists are not up to date, reflecting only those currently living in the area.
2. Replacement ballots can be sent, but will be noted in registry.
3. It is easy to take ballots out of many mailboxes or even out of the trash and thus can be voted fraudulently. Vote harvesting can also be done with voters being persuaded by the harvester to vote certain ways. This has been known to happen with absentee ballots in nursing homes. Sometimes the harvester fills out the ballot simply “helping” the voter.
4. Secrecy of the vote is not guaranteed nor is it guaranteed that a mail in ballot votes will be recorded because the voter does not witness it.
5. Counting will start 2 weeks in advance. It is a drawn out process with no guarantees that poll watchers will be there to check them.
6. Recent experience has taught that it may take weeks to finish counting.
7. Note that the postal service is still bogged down with bills and payments taking sometimes 3 weeks to reach the destination.

In recent years, Maryland has gone to early voting for all voters who choose to do it, not just limited to election day. Our state has no Voter picture ID requirement nor a signature check. There is so much that can turn an election into an unfair outcome. Add ballots mailed to everyone on the voter rolls can make fair elections even more unfair, or yes, fraudulent. Do you really want a large number of citizens to fear that elections will likely be fraudulent?

For these reasons, please oppose this bill.

Respectfully,

Dee Hodges, President
Maryland Taxpayers Assoc &
Republican Women of Baltimore County