

## **Election Law - Registered Voter List Security and Electronic Signature Requirements for Petitions**

**Bill Sponsor:** Delegate Shelia Ruth

**Committee:** Ways and Means

**Organization Submitting:** Lower Shore Progressive Caucus

**Person Submitting:** Jared Schablein, LSPC Chair

**Position:** **FAVORABLE**

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0355 on behalf of the Lower Shore Progressive Caucus. The Caucus is a political and activist organization on the Eastern Shore, unaffiliated with any political party, committed to empowering working people by building a Progressive movement on the Lower Eastern Shore.

Ensuring that all Marylanders can easily participate in our Democratic Process is a top priority of the Lower Shore Progressive Caucus and our members. HB0355 is a common-sense bill that achieves this crucial goal in two major ways.

The first way is by better securing vital information crucial to running our elections. The bill accomplishes this by requiring the State Board of Elections adopt regulations specifying requirements for the secure storage and use of voter data for copies of the registered voters list.

The second way is by modernizing the State Board of Elections and their process. The bill accomplishes this by requiring the State Board to adopt regulations specifying procedures for the collection of electronic signatures on petitions. By allowing the collection of electronic signatures for petitions we can ensure our State Board of Election and our Democratic Process is keeping with the times as well as make it easier for voters to be informed and involved in our elections.

To put it simply allowing voters the ability to sign petitions electronically makes our system more accessible, more Democratic, and in step with the world we live in today based around technology. It is for these reasons the Lower Shore Progressive Caucus supports this bill and recommends a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.