



**TESTIMONY FOR HB1048
ELECTION LAW – PERMANENT ABSENTEE BALLOT LIST**

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Wilkins

Committee: Ways and Means

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB1048 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

This bill will allow for any voter to file a request to be on a permanent absentee ballot list, which will mean that they automatically get a mail-in ballot for each election. There are provisions for the state Board of Elections to communicate with the voter during the process, as well as a process to ensure that the voter receives the ballot at their current address when they change addresses. Finally, there is a process to ensure that the voter can remove themselves from the permanent absentee ballot list.

It has been shown that states that have implemented this form of permanent mail-in ballots have a higher percentage of voters participating in the voting process. This is an admirable goal, and one that we feel the state should reach for.

The Maryland Legislative Coalition supports this bill and recommends a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.