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HOUSE WAYS & MEANS
HB 1020: Election Law– Curbside Voting -- Establishment

March 9, 2021 1:30 p.m.

Position: Support

As the designated protection and advocacy organization for Maryland and by authority of the Help America Vote Act, Disability Rights Maryland (DRM), formerly Maryland Disability Law Center, is charged with assisting persons with disabilities to participate fully in the electoral process. Pursuant to this mandate, DRM seeks to ensure election access to a wide range of individuals with disabilities, including, but not limited to, individuals with physical, cognitive, and sensory disabilities.

Disability Rights Maryland (DRM) supports HB 1020 which would require curbside voting be provided to voters with disabilities. DRM deploys a voter rights hotline for disabled voters on election day and during early voting. During the past three election cycles staff has received reports of temporary inaccessible polling locations. Creating a system for curbside voting would allow election judges to continue to serve voters while physical barriers are addressed and remediated. DRM has also received reports of other barriers that would be alleviated by curbside voting namely; voters that have difficulty ambulating waiting in long lines or polling locations running of accessible parking. Curbside voting could remedy not only the aforementioned barriers to accessibility but other unforeseen difficulties with the end result being increased enfranchisement among disabled voters. For these reasons DRM urges a favorable report.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

For more information contact:

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