



# Maryland Association of Election Officials

## Representing the Local Election Boards of the State of Maryland

March 23, 2022

The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky, Chair  
Maryland Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee  
2 West, Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

### **RE: HB862 – Support**

Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan and Committee Members:

My name is Katherine Berry. I am the Election Director in Carroll County and the co-chair of the Maryland Association of Election Officials (MAEO) Legislative Committee. MAEO represents the local boards of elections throughout the State of Maryland. I am writing today representing MAEO in support of HB862 – Election Law – Ballot Canvassing – Multiple Ballots Cast by an Individual.

This bill would allow a local board to accept the first ballot that is received as legally sufficient in the event that more than one ballot is received by a voter using different envelopes. Prior to the 2020 election, Maryland rejected both ballots if there was more than one ballot returned. Due to the emergency measures in 2020, we were able to count the first ballot that was received.

MAEO would like to continue the practice of ensuring all voters have a voice during elections, so codifying the practice of counting one ballot and rejecting another in a uniform manner is acceptable. Some of the most common examples of a voter submitting two ballots are 1.) due to lack of confidence that the absentee ballot was received by the local board of elections, 2.) because the voter changed who they wanted to vote for and went to vote on election day, 3.) the voter forgot they submitted a mail-in ballot and request a new ballot be sent to them, and 4.) the voter requested a web delivered ballot and they print is more than one time. It is necessary to have a consistent requirement either in law or simply in regulation to ensure all local boards of elections are counting the same ballot because some counties have canvasses for a day while others have canvass for weeks. This bill also suggests to the voter that they cannot simply “change their mind” in who they’re voting for since it’s not allowed for someone to vote at early voting and then come back on election day because they “changed their mind”.

MAEO asks the committee for a favorable report as it pertains to HB862. This bill assists us in effectively managing ballots during the canvass process.

Thank you for your time. If you have any questions, please contact me at (410)386-2958 or [Katherine.berry@maryland.gov](mailto:Katherine.berry@maryland.gov).

[www.maeo.net](http://www.maeo.net)