



**Maryland Developmental
Disabilities Council**

CREATING CHANGE • IMPROVING LIVES

House Ways and Means Committee

HB 702: Election Judges - Training and Signs - Accommodations for Voters in Need of Assistance

February 15, 2022

Position: Support

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council (DD Council) is an independent, public policy organization that creates changes to make it possible for people with developmental disabilities to live the lives they want with the support they need. The DD Council is led by people with developmental disabilities and their families. **From that perspective, the DD Council supports HB 702 as it will make voting in-person easier and more accessible for people with disabilities.**

WHAT does this legislation do?

- The bill requires that the training materials provided to election judges include information on the various ways that an election judge can provide assistance or accommodations to elderly voters and voters with disabilities.
- It also requires that the State Board of Elections develop signs that must be posted at specific locations at a polling place that clearly explain how election judges can provide assistance and accommodations to voters with disabilities.

WHY is this legislation important?

- All Marylanders must have equitable access to their fundamental right to vote.
- Election judges and staff working at polling places should be knowledgeable and aware of the ways to support voters with disabilities and able to provide assistance and information that allows all voters to easily, privately, and fairly participate in the electoral process.
- It will promote an inclusive and supportive environment at polling locations.

HB 702 is an important step to ensure that people with disabilities have the resources necessary to exercise their fundamental right to vote. For that reason, the DD Council supports HB 702.

The DD Council recommends that any signs developed for the general public be written in plain language so that they are accessible to everyone.

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