

DANA JONES
Legislative District 30A
Anne Arundel County

Ways and Means Committee



The Maryland House of Delegates
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony of Delegate Dana Jones
Before the Ways and Means Committee

In Support of HB327
Elections - Election Judges - Minimum Compensation
February 8, 2022, pm

Chair Atterbeary, Vice-Chair Washington, and fellow members of the Ways and Means Committee,

For the record - I am Delegate Dana Jones.

I come before you today to introduce a bill that would ensure election workers are fairly compensated for their essential work.

Currently, local boards of election are not required to pay election workers minimum wage. In many counties, the qualifications to be a judge specifically state that they should be “Physically and mentally able to work at least a 15-hour day.” If judges did work a 15 hour day, they would only be making \$13/hour in Prince George’s, \$11/hour in Anne Arundel, and just \$5/hr in Allegany. For example, in Anne Arundel County, all election judges are compensated \$165.00 or \$225.00, depending on position, for their services. In Prince George’s County, election judges are paid \$200 and in Allegany County, they are paid \$80.

With these long hours and, frankly, shamefully low wages it is no wonder that many local boards of elections face difficulty trying to recruit election workers. Just last month, my local board of elections reached out to the Anne Arundel County Delegation to state that “one of the most difficult tasks...when preparing for an election is recruiting and hiring Election Judges” and noted that they are still in need of 650 additional workers before the upcoming election.

Ensuring that Marylanders are paid a minimum wage is the very least we should do to those who facilitate the very foundation of our democracy.

Our state's policies are a reflection of our values. If we continue to pay our essential election workers less than we pay any other employee in our economy, what does that say about the importance we place on those who administer our most treasured democratic right?

I respectfully urge a favorable report on this bill.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dana Jones". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the name.

Delegate Dana Jones