

**HB1089 - Election Law - Registered Voter List Security and Electronic
Signature Requirements for Petitions**

House Ways and Means Committee

March 1, 2022

Position: Favorable

Dear Chair Atterbeary and Members of the Committee,

Clean Water Action strongly supports HB1089 as a valuable method of making the tools of our democracy more accessible to Maryland residents.

Ballot petitions are a valuable tool for individual Marylanders to organize and make their opinions heard directly. Over the years, Clean Water Action staff and members have supported a wide variety of such petitions. However, the requirement that petitions be signed on paper is burdensome and holds people back from participating in the process. People with disabilities, people who are dependent on transit, and people whose jobs have lengthy or irregular hours face extra barriers to connecting with a petition circulator in person to sign - let alone barriers to participating in the process by collecting signatures themselves.

The ongoing pandemic has only heightened these barriers to participating in ballot access campaigns. In 2020, the State Board of Elections created temporary measures to allow electronic signatures, proving that they are possible and safe. Please pass HB1089 to make electronic signatures on ballot petitions accessible to Marylanders into the future, giving more people more access to the tools of our democracy.

Thank you,

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