

**HB 702 Election Judges – Training and Signs – Accommodations for Voters
in Need of Assistance
SUPPORT
House Ways and Means Committee
February 15, 2022**

Good afternoon Chairwoman Attebeary and Members of the House Ways and Means Committee. My name is Jim Campbell, a former member of the House of Delegates and a former member of this committee and now state president of AARP Maryland. AARP MD supports **HB 702 Election Judges – Training and Signs – Accommodations for Voters in Need of Assistance**. We thank Delegate Hill for introducing this bill.

AARP is the largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization representing the interests of Americans age 50 and older and their families. Key priorities of our organization include helping all Marylanders achieve financial and health security. In particular AARP strongly believes that all individuals have the right to be self-reliant and live with dignity in retirement.

HB 245 requires that election judges receive training for oral and written instruction methods to assist elderly or disabled individuals in voting. This would also include protections and access to ways an election official could assist infirm voters who cannot stand in line for long periods of time.

As someone, like many of you, who has worked polling places on election day, I applaud the sponsor for attempting to improve access for our most vulnerable citizens.

Many times, while working the polls, I came across older citizens who had questions about how to use the voting machines but were not willing to ask questions of election judges. Many of these folks have voted in person their whole lives but fear changes make it too difficult for them to vote. We want all citizens to exercise their right to vote. This bill, with its emphasis on voters in need of assistance, addresses those concerns.

AARP believes that voting-rights laws should address the needs of people with physical disabilities. Federal laws mandate improved access to registration and polling places. They also require better outreach to older adults and people with disabilities.

AARP Maryland respectfully requests the House Ways and Means Committee to issue a favorable report for HB 245.

For questions or additional information, please feel free to contact Tammy Bresnahan, Director of Advocacy at tbresnahan@aarpm.org or by calling 410-302-8451.

