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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
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HB 707 – Election Law – Deadline for Selection of Lieutenant Governor

House Ways and Means Committee – February 15, 2022

HB 707 extends the timeframe during which a candidate seeking their party's gubernatorial nomination may choose a running mate, the Lieutenant Governor. My purpose in introducing this bill is to expand the pool of viable, qualified nominees for Lt. Governor and, in this way, allow Maryland's political parties to build a more dynamic gubernatorial ticket. Ultimately, the State will benefit when this change creates a stronger leadership team.

As it stands now, the Maryland Constitution requires a primary candidate for Governor on the day they file with the Elections Board to also designate their choice for Lt. Governor.

This schedule creates a troubling scenario in which current office-holders, for example, have to decide whether to give up their position to join a candidate who may or may not win the primary. It also prevents other, highly qualified gubernatorial candidates, who did not come in first, from running for Lt. Governor.

Through a change to the constitution, HB 707 will allow the Lt. Governor choice to be made 21 days after the primary. The gubernatorial nominee will have a full three weeks to choose their running mate among a significantly increased list of candidates.

Paul Pinsky, Chairman of the Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee is sponsoring the Senate cross-file to this bill.

I urge a favorable report of HB 707. Thank you.