

**SB0860-EEE\_MaCo\_SUP.pdf**

Uploaded by: Kevin Kinnally

Position: FAV



## **Senate Bill 860**

### *State Board of Elections - Procurement Oversight*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Education, Energy, and the  
Environment Committee

Date: March 3, 2023

From: Kevin Kinnally

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 860. The bill makes timely and necessary updates to election laws to promote fairness, transparency, and accountability.

SB 860 requires the State Board of Elections (SBE) to take necessary and appropriate steps to provide transparency and accountability for contracts and procurement decisions, which will afford ample opportunity for input from local governments and Maryland voters.

An essential function of Maryland's county governments is to fund and oversee elections. Too often, the State makes unilateral decisions that oblige county funds – with zero local input. Counties, who run elections, should have input on major procurement contracts, as part of a true partnership with the State.

Under the bill, before issuing a request for proposals or an invitation for bids, the State Administrator or the Procurement Officer for the State Board must disclose the request for proposals or invitation for bids to the State Board. Further, before executing a procurement contract, the State Administrator or Procurement Officer must disclose the contract to the State Board. Finally, the State Board must vote to approve large procurement contracts before being submitted to the Board of Public Works for approval.

SB 860 provides necessary and timely policy changes that balance the shared goals of providing fair, open, and transparent elections. Accordingly, MACo requests a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 860.

# **SB 860 - State Board of Elections - Procurement Ov**

Uploaded by: Morgan Drayton

Position: FAV

**March 3, 2023**

**Testimony on SB 860**  
**State Board of Elections - Procurement Oversight**  
**Education, Energy, and the Environment**

**Position:** Favorable

Common Cause Maryland is in support of SB 860, which would require the Administrator of the State Board of Elections (SBE) to disclose all proposed contracts to the SBE Board, including draft Requests for Proposal (RFPs).

There is growing frustration by citizens over the role that special interests are playing within our government. Particularly in situations where it can appear that there is a conflict of interest, the state does not have unlimited ability to fight back against the surging tide of special interest money. SB 860 takes steps to address this issue by requiring the SBE Board to debate and vote on contracts over \$200,000 prior to their submission to the Board of Public Works.

SB 860 would protect and advance the values of transparency within our government. For these reasons, we request a favorable report on the bill.

**SB860\_ SBE Procurement Transparency 3.2.23.pdf**

Uploaded by: Sen. Cheryl Kagan

Position: FAV

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Vice Chair  
Education, Energy, and  
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Joint Audit and Evaluation Committee

Joint Committee on Federal Relations



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**SB860: State Administrator of Elections - Contract Procurement Transparency**

Education, Energy, Environment (& Elections!) Committee

Friday, March 3, 2023 1PM

SBE Procurement Transparency ([SB860](#)) would require the Administrator of the State Board of Elections (SBE) to disclose **all** proposed Requests for Proposals (RFPs) or Invitation for Bids to the SBE. Any RFP or bid expected to have a value of over \$200,000 must be debated and voted on by the Board of Elections before the application process can begin. Likewise, any contract over \$200,000 must be considered and approved by the Board before being submitted to the Board of Public Works.

“Procurement” may sound like a purely administrative function, but it determines vital components of our electoral systems, such as:

- Which [voting machines are selected](#);
- Printing Voter Registration cards;
- Who will [print ballots](#) for Maryland voters;
- The [training](#) of election judges;
- Sorting & delivering mail-in ballots;
- Who conducts [election audits](#);
- ... and more!

As a matter of fiscal responsibility, the bipartisan SBE Board **must** have a say in how and where Maryland taxpayers’ money is spent. Although the Board of Public Works already approves large State contracts, its members may not have the same level of elections expertise as the SBE Board. This bill enacts a simple fix to initial SBE Board approval and accountability to ensure that RFPs are only undertaken with appropriate oversight.

Sunlight and transparency are the best ways to maintain voter confidence in our electoral system. Disclosure of contracts and large RFPs to the Board will enhance public access to this information through live-streamed SBE meetings and guarantee that the [variety of problems](#) experienced in the 2020 elections do not reoccur.

**I urge a favorable report on SB860.**