

March 7, 2023

Testimony on HB 1092
Election Law – Early Voting – Number of Days
Ways and Means

Position: Unfavorable

Common Cause Maryland opposes HB 1092, which would reduce the number of days early voting centers are required to be open before a primary or general election from eight to four.

We have always been in strong support of legislation that expands early voting in the state, balancing the staffing and support needs of local boards while ensuring that all voters have ample time to cast a ballot. Early voting has been established to drive participation up and make voting more convenient: a study by the Center for American progress found that 14% of registered voters cited schedule conflicts as their reason for not voting, with 2% specifying that vote center have inconvenient hours. Decreasing the amount of early voting days as proposed in HB 1092 may cause an undesirable decline in voter participation as we approach the 2024 Presidential election cycle.

At a time when attacks on the right to vote are becoming increasingly common, we should taking steps to remove barriers to casting a ballot, rather than erect them – HB 1092 is contrary to that purpose. For these reasons, we urge an unfavorable report from the committee.