



Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

CREATING CHANGE • IMPROVING LIVES

Ways & Means Committee

HB 1216: Election Law – Voting – Proof of Identity

March 7, 2023

Position: Oppose

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council (DD Council) is an independent, public policy organization that creates changes to make it possible for people with developmental disabilities to live the lives they want with the support they need. People with developmental disabilities and their families lead the DD Council. **From that perspective, the DD Council opposes HB 35 due to the disproportionate and negative impact it would have on voters with developmental disabilities.**

WHAT does this legislation do:

- Requires a voter to present government-issued photo identification that includes a signature
- Requires a voter to provide a written signature at the time of voting that matches the signature on the identification

WHY is this a problem?

- It makes voting more difficult and cumbersome.
- It disproportionately affects voters with disabilities because they are nearly twice as likely not to have government-issued photo identification.
- It creates barriers for people with developmental disabilities because:
 - People with disabilities are more likely to vote by absentee ballot due to existing voting location accessibility issues.
 - People with disabilities are more likely not to be able to provide a written signature.

Voters with developmental disabilities want and need access to participate effectively in the electoral process. HB 1216 is a step in the wrong direction. **For that reason, the DD Council opposes HB 1216.**

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