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## House Bill 261

Date: February 12, 2024  
Committee: House Economic Matters Committee  
Bill Title: Unemployment Insurance - Benefits - Election Judges  
Re: **Letter of Support**

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States across the country have struggled to find enough election judges to fully staff polls during elections. House Bill 261 (H.B. 261 or “the Bill”) would amend the Labor and Employment Title, Section 8-101 to exclude “any payment to an individual as compensation for serving as an election judge for a local board of elections in the State” from the definition of “wages.” The Bill would therefore not require election judge compensation to be deducted from an unemployment insurance (UI) claimant’s benefit amount even if the amount of compensation exceeds the income disregard in § 8-803(d)(1)(iii).

The Division of Unemployment Insurance (“the Division”) anticipates that any increase in expenditures (from paying more in benefits to UI claimants who serve as election judges) is likely to be insubstantial given the number of claimants who will likely fall into this category.

However, the Division agrees that HB 261 would encourage Marylanders to serve their community and complete a valuable public service while earning some compensation during a period of unemployment and that this concern outweighs any de minimis increase to expenditures anticipated by the Division.

**To that end, the Maryland Department of Labor asks for a Favorable report from the Committee on HB 261.**