



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony in Support of HB 479
Election Law – Deadline for Selection of Lieutenant Governor

HB 479 extends the time frame during which a candidate seeking their party's gubernatorial nomination may choose a running mate. This bill would expand the pool of viable, qualified nominees for Lieutenant Governor and allow Maryland's political parties to build a more dynamic gubernatorial ticket.

As it currently stands, the Maryland Constitution requires a primary candidate for Governor to designate their choice for Lieutenant Governor on the day they file their candidacy with the State Board of Elections.

Maryland's current requirements prevent each party's nominee for Governor from picking the most qualified Lieutenant Governor, since gubernatorial candidates are competing with each other for their pick for running mate. Our current system also precludes a gubernatorial nominee from picking one of their unsuccessful primary opponents. Many of these candidates offer specific expertise and experience that could help balance a party's ticket, forge party unity, and offer voters a strong and diverse leadership team. Moreover, the current schedule requires current officeholders who would otherwise be up for re-election in that election to decide whether to give up their current position to join a gubernatorial candidate who may or may not win the primary election.

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, Maryland is one of just 8 states in which a gubernatorial candidate must select their running mate before the primary.¹

If passed, this legislation would be put to a vote on the Maryland 2024 ballot.

¹ Illinois, Kansas, Maryland, Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota, Ohio, and Utah.