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February 13, 2024

TO: The Hon. Vanessa Atterbeary
Chair, Ways and Means Committee

FROM: Adam Spangler
Legislative Aide, Legislative Affairs, Office of the Attorney General

RE: House Bill 459 Election Administration – State Administrator, Local Boards, and Election Directors – **Support**

The Office of the Attorney General requests a favorable report on House Bill 459 - Election Administration – State Administrator, Local Boards, and Election Directors. House Bill 459 requires the State Board of Elections (SBE) to evaluate the performance of the State Administrator of Elections and requires the State Administrator to provide a performance evaluation of the election director of each local board of elections to the local board. HB 459 requires each local board to confer with the State Administrator in appointing an election director, maintain a warehouse, and provide for early voting center expenses.

In its October 2023 report, the Maryland Office of Legislative Auditors (OLA) found that “SBE could enhance its procedures to fully identify deceased or duplicate voters in the MDVOTERS [database], and ensure local boards of election (LBEs) corrected errors in voter data identified during periodic reviews.” HB 459 holds the SBE accountable should errors are found in the data entry of irrespective of whether it was the sole responsibility of a Local Board of Election.

HB 459 would allow the Administrator to detect issues through direct communications with the election director of each local elections board by using objective performance standards. Therefore, each LBE will have to meet the same standards without deviation from one LBE to another.

For the foregoing reasons the Office of the Attorney General requests a favorable report on House Bill 459.

cc: Delegate Dana Jones
Ways & Means Committee Members