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**SB66 Election Law - Polling Place Procedures – Voting by Elderly Voters and
Voters with Disabilities
(Accessible and Expedited Voting Act of Maryland)**

**FAVORABLE
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
February 5, 2025**

Good afternoon, Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee. My name is Jim Campbell, President Emeritus for AARP Maryland, and a former Maryland State Delegate. AARP Maryland supports SB66 and thanks Senator Ellis for sponsoring this legislation.

AARP Maryland represents more than 850,000 members statewide and is the largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization advocating for Marylanders aged 50 and older, as well as their families. Key priorities of our organization include helping all Marylanders achieve financial and health security. AARP Maryland strongly believes that all individuals have the right to be self-reliant and live with dignity in retirement. This includes the ability to vote and express one's opinion at the ballot box.

What SB66 Does

SB 66 requires the State Board of Elections to implement:

- A training program to include instruction on best practices for assisting elderly voters and voters with disabilities as defined in the Federal Americans with Disabilities Act; and
- Guidelines for local boards to accommodate and expedite voting for elderly voters and voters with disabilities including.
 - Dedicated expedited lines for elderly voters and voters with disabilities,
 - Clearly marked signage indicating these expedited lines,
 - Priority seating in waiting areas, and
 - Specific provisions for high-traffic early voting centers.
- SB66 also requires the Board to collect feedback from elderly voters and voters with disabilities as to the efficacy of the procedures and to adjust practices as needed.

Why it Matters

Many times, while working the polls, I have encountered older citizens who had questions about voting procedures but were not comfortable asking questions of election judges. In some cases, persons with mobility or other challenges will not even try to vote for concern over their personal

safety or their ability to navigate the process on their own. Voting is the cornerstone of our democracy, and it is incumbent upon us to ensure the accessibility of this right to every citizen. By addressing accessibility and best practices for assisting elderly voters and voters with disabilities as outlined in the bill, these changes can create a more welcoming environment to wary voters and fulfill the promise of an engaged citizenry.

For these reasons, AARP Maryland respectfully asks the Committee to support SB66. For questions or additional information, please feel free to contact Tammy Bresnahan, Senior Director of Advocacy at tbresnahan@aarps.org or by calling 410.301.8451.