



Maryland Municipal League
The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns

TESTIMONY

February 26, 2025

Committee: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment

Bill: SB 342 - Voting Rights Act of 2025 - Counties and Municipalities

Position: Oppose

Reason for Position:

The Maryland Municipal League (MML) respectfully opposes Senate Bill 342, which creates additional administrative burden and potential legal exposure, and reduces local autonomy for local governments conducting elections.

The proposed law prohibits the imposition of election methods that impair the ability of protected class members to elect their candidates of choice. This could lead to municipalities needing to change how they elect their governing bodies from long-standing electoral methods they believe are effective or fair. Municipalities view this as an overreach that interferes with local autonomy without sufficient justification, which reduces their ability to tailor electoral systems to their specific needs and contexts.

This measure also allows the Attorney General to file legal actions to challenge alleged voting issues more easily, which could lead to a significant increase in lawsuits against municipalities. Participating in these suits, even if the municipality prevails, utilizes valuable limited resources.

For these reasons, the League respectfully requests that the Committee provide Senate Bill 342 with an unfavorable report. For more information, please contact Angelica Bailey Thupari, Director of Advocacy and Public Affairs, at angelicab@mdmunicipal.org or (443) 756-0071. Thank you for your consideration.

The Maryland Municipal League uses its collective voice to advocate, empower and protect the interests of our 160 local governments members and elevates local leadership, delivers impactful solutions for our communities, and builds an inclusive culture for the 2 million Marylanders we serve.