



Maryland Association of Election Officials

Representing the Local Election Boards of the State of Maryland

February 5, 2025

Senator Brian J. Feldman, Chair
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Committee Members,

SB93 - Information

The Maryland Association of Election Officials (MAEO) is the professional membership organization representing local election officials and Election Boards across all 24 jurisdictions in Maryland. Our members are committed to ensuring the smooth and effective administration of elections and are deeply dedicated to making Maryland elections accessible, secure, and fair.

MAEO wishes to provide information on Election Law - Absentee Ballot Application - Sending to Eligible Voters Before Primary Elections SB93, which requires the local boards of election to send each eligible voter an absentee application at least 60 days prior to each statewide primary election. SB93 has the potential to place undue monetary and logistical burden on the local boards of elections.

Local Boards of Election understand the motive of SB93 is to ensure that mail-in ballot applications continue to be sent to any active registered voter who has not previously requested to permanently receive a mail-in ballot. In the past two election cycles, the obligation to mail applications to this population was placed on the State Board of Elections and the cost was split with local boards. With each subsequent mailing, we might expect fewer voters to avail themselves of this option so we must consider the potential ramifications of SB93 as written. This bill will require large scale mailings every two years as this bill indicates that mailings are indefinite. Extensive, repetitive mailings at the local board level will place an inordinate financial encumbrance on the local boards of election, particularly if each board is solely responsible for the cost. We recognize in the fiscal note that there is an assumption that costs will be shared by the state and local jurisdictions, but we do not see such language in the bill.

SB93 will require local boards of election to either usurp time during an election cycle that is dedicated to other office operations in order to mail out applications, or it will require them to finance the mailings through a vendor. Choosing to encumber the local boards of election with this financial and logistical plight may negatively impact regular operations without yielding the intended results.

Currently, voters have an opportunity to exercise the right to vote by mail by requesting to do so in writing or online through the State Board of Elections website. These options would continue to be available regardless of the passage of this particular bill.

MAEO supports ongoing goals of improving election administration while maximizing efficient and effective workloads for the local boards of elections. For these reasons, we respectfully thank you for your time and consideration of this information in your deliberations on Senate Bill 93.