

DRM Testimony - Support- SB 18 Increase Early Numb

Uploaded by: Braden Stinar

Position: FAV

SENATE EDUCATION, ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

February 5, 2025

SB 18 – Election Law – Early Voting – Number of Days

Position: SUPPORT

Disability Rights Maryland (DRM) is the Protection & Advocacy agency in Maryland, federally mandated to advance the civil rights of people with disabilities. DRM works to increase opportunities for Marylanders with disabilities to be part of their communities through voting by advocating for equal and equitable access to the ballot box.

DRM strongly supports SB 18, which extends the early voting period by four days. Expanding early voting enhances voter participation by providing a more accessible means to cast a ballot. This extension is important for individuals with disabilities as it allows greater flexibility, increasing the opportunity to exercise fundamental voting rights.

Over the past few election cycles, the number of voters with disabilities has increased as access to the ballot box has expanded. In 2020, 62% of individuals with disabilities cast their votes—a significant rise from 56% in 2016.¹ Further, the Rutgers Program for Disability Research found that 40.2 million Americans were eligible to vote in 2024.² It is apparent that strengthening access to the voting process will result in more Americans engaging in the practice.

¹ <https://www.eac.gov/news/2021/07/07/new-data-177-million-americans-disabilities-voted-2020-significant-increase-over>

²

https://smlr.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/Documents/Centers/Program_Disability_Research/Disability_Electorate_Projections_Report_Oct2024.pdf

Early voting enables individuals to engage in the electoral process at a time that fits their schedules, and in a manner that allows their needs and schedules to be accommodated. Prior to the passage of the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) in 2000, the voter turnout for individuals with disabilities was nearly 17% lower than their nondisabled peers. In 2020, the gap has narrowed to 11%.³ It is clear that individuals with disabilities are ready and eager to engage in an electoral process when provided adequate access. This bill builds on ongoing efforts to eliminate barriers to the ballot box, ensuring a more inclusive voting experience and strengthening our democratic process as a whole.

For these reasons, we request a favorable report on Senate Bill 18. Please do not hesitate to contact me BradenS@DisabilityRightsMD.org or 410-929-6859.

Respectfully submitted,
Braden Stinar, Esq.
Attorney
Disability Rights Maryland

Respectfully submitted,
Braden Stinar, Esq.
Attorney
Disability Rights Maryland

³ <https://adasoutheast.org/elections-have-gotten-more-accessible-for-disabled-voters-but-gaps-remain/>

SB 18 - Sponsor Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: C. Anthony Muse

Position: FAV



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

TESTIMONY

Senate Bill 18: Election Law – Early Voting Number of Days

Good afternoon, Chairman Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of EEE, Senate Bill 18, proposes reducing Maryland's early voting period from eight to five days.

As you know, Maryland implemented early voting in **2010** to provide greater flexibility for voters who may not be able to cast their ballots on Election Day. The goal was to increase participation by offering additional opportunities to vote, recognizing that rigid Election Day-only voting could be a barrier for some. Since then, Maryland has expanded early voting and, more recently, introduced **no-excuse mail-in voting**, which has significantly changed voter behavior.

As of 2024, Maryland operated **87 early voting centers statewide**, with **11 in Prince George's County**. Running these sites requires a significant financial commitment. Election judges, mandated by **Maryland Code, Election Law § 10-205**, receive the following compensation:

- **Chief Judges:** \$250 per day
- **Election Judges:** \$200 per day
- **Training Compensation:** \$50 per required session

With multiple judges per site, combined with costs for equipment, security, and administrative support, the state spends **millions annually** on early voting operations. Each additional day of early voting increases these costs.

Shifting Voter Trends: The Growth of Mail-In Ballots

The expansion of mail-in voting has fundamentally changed how Marylanders vote. Data from recent elections shows a clear trend toward **increased mail-in voting**, while early voting participation has remained steady or declined in comparison.

Maryland Voter Turnout by Voting Method

Year	Early Voting	Election Day	Mail-In Ballots
2024	989,923	1,149,987	752,589
2022	731,272	1,074,677	345,081
2020	977,951	350,765	1,541,273
2012	430,573	1,719,123	78,748

- In 2020, mail-in ballots **surpassed early voting** for the first time, driven by **pandemic**-related expansions.
- In 2022, even with fewer COVID-related restrictions, **mail-in ballots still doubled** from 2018 levels.
- In 2024, mail-in ballots remained a popular option, with 752,589 votes cast this way.

This trend confirms that many voters are opting for mail-in ballots as a convenient alternative to in-person early voting. While Election Day remains the most common method of voting, early voting and mail-in ballots are nearly equal in usage.

Why Should Maryland Reduce Early Voting Days

Given this shift toward mail-in ballots, Maryland has an opportunity to reduce costs while maintaining voting accessibility. Reducing early voting from eight to five days would:

1. **Generate Cost Savings** – By reducing the number of operational days, Maryland would save millions in election judge pay, site rental costs, security, and staffing.
2. **Reflect Voter Preferences** – With mail-in ballots now an established and widely used option, fewer voters rely solely on early voting.
3. **Maintain Accessibility** – Reducing early voting by three days still leaves **five days** of early voting, along with mail-in and Election Day options, ensuring no voter is disenfranchised.

Senate Bill 18 aligns Maryland's voting system with voter behavior while promoting fiscal responsibility. The increase in mail-in voting has reduced the need for an extended early voting period. A five-day early voting window, combined with mail-in and Election Day voting, preserves accessibility while cutting unnecessary expenses.

SB 18 would allow Maryland the ability to adapt its election policies to balance voter convenience with cost efficiency. Reducing early voting by three days is a logical, data-driven step that allows the state to save taxpayer money while ensuring every voter has ample opportunities to participate.

Therefore, I respectfully urge a **FAVORABLE** report for SB 18, which will make Maryland's election system more cost-effective while continuing to encourage voter participation.

Maryland State Board of Elections

Early Voting Centers – 2024 General Election

There are locations in each county where you can vote before election day. To vote early in the 2024 General Election, go to a location in your county Thursday, October 24th through Thursday, October 31st **between 7 am and 8 pm**. If you vote early, you **cannot** vote on election day or by mail-in ballot.

Allegany County (1 center)

Allegany County Office Complex
701 Kelly Road, Room 100
Cumberland, MD 21502

Anne Arundel County (10 centers)

Anne Arundel County Board of Elections
6740 Baymeadow Drive
Glen Burnie, MD 21060

Bowie Elks Lodge 2309
1506 Defense Highway
Gambrills, MD 21054

Broadneck Library
1275 Green Holly Drive
Annapolis, MD 21409

Deale Elks Lodge
6022 Drum Point Road
Deale, MD 20751

Earleigh Heights Volunteer Fire Company #12
161 Ritchie Highway
Severna Park, MD 21146

Odenton Library
1325 Annapolis Road
Odenton, MD 21113

Riviera Beach Library
1130 Duvall Highway
Pasadena, MD 21122

Roger “Pip” Moyer Recreation Center
273 Hilltop Lane
Annapolis, MD 21403

Severn Center
1160 Reece Road
Severn, MD 21144

South County Senior Activity Center
27 Stepneys Lane
Edgewater, MD 21037

Baltimore City (8 centers)

BCCC South Pavilion
2600 Liberty Heights Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21215

Farring-Baybrook Recreation Center
4501 Farring Court
Baltimore, MD 21225

James McHenry Recreation Center
911 Hollins Street
Baltimore, MD 21224

The League for People with Disabilities
1111 E. Coldspring Lane
Baltimore, MD 21239

Mount Pleasant Church & Ministries
6000 Radecke Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21206

Public Safety Training Center
3500 W. Northern Parkway (Enter on Manhattan Ave)
Baltimore, MD 21215

Southeast Anchor Library
3601 Eastern Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21224

Westside Skill Center
4501 Edmondson Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21229

Baltimore County (11 centers)

Arbutus Recreation Center
865 Sulphur Spring Road
Halethorpe, MD 21227

Baltimore County Board of Elections
5 Crossing Way
Owings Mills, MD 21117

Honeygo Run Community Center
9033 Honeygo Boulevard
Perry Hall, MD 21128

Jacksonville Recreation Center at Sweet Air Park
3605 B Sweet Air Road
Phoenix, MD 21131

Maryland State Fairgrounds - Mosner Miller Building
2200 York Road
Timonium, MD 21093

Randallstown Community Center
3505 Resource Drive
Randallstown, MD 21133

Reisterstown Senior Center – Hannah More Campus
12035 Reisterstown Road
Reisterstown, MD 21136

Towson University South Campus Pavilion
1 Auburn Drive
Towson, Maryland 21204

Victory Villa Community Center
404 Compass Road E.
Middle River, MD 21220

Watersedge Community Center - Gym
7894 Dundalk Avenue
Dundalk, MD 21222

Woodlawn Community Center
2120 Gwynn Oak Avenue
Woodlawn, MD 21207

Calvert County (3 centers)

Community Resources Building
30 Duke Street – Lower Level
Prince Frederick, MD 20678

Southern Community Center
20 Appeal Lane
Lusby, MD 20657

Ward Farm Vote Center
10455 Ward Road,
Dunkirk, MD 20754

Caroline County (1 center)

Health and Public Services Building
403 S. Seventh Street, Room 112
Denton, MD 21629

Carroll County (3 centers)

Coppermine Pantherplex
1400 Panther Drive
Hampstead, MD 21074

South Carroll Senior Center
5928 Mineral Hill Road
Sykesville, MD 21784

Westminster Senior Activities Center
125 Stoner Avenue
Westminster, MD 21157

Cecil County (2 centers)

Cecil County Administration Building – Elk Room
200 Chesapeake Boulevard
Elkton, MD 21921

Church of Nazarene
2626 Jacob Memorial Highway
Colora, MD 21917

Charles County (3 centers)

Charles County Fairgrounds and Event Center
8440 Fairground Road
La Plata, MD 20646

St. Joseph Church Hall
4605 St. Joseph's Way
Pomfret, MD 20675

Waldorf Jaycees
3090 Crain Highway
Waldorf, MD 20601

Dorchester County (1 center)

Dorchester Election Office
1000 Goodwill Avenue
Cambridge, MD 21613

Frederick County (4 centers)

Frederick Prospect Center
585 Himes Avenue
Frederick, MD 21703

Middletown VFD Activities Building
1 Fireman's Lane
Middletown, MD 21769

Thurmont Regional Library
76 E. Moser Road
Thurmont, MD 21788

Urbana Regional Library
9020 Amelung Street
Frederick, MD 21704

Garrett County (2 centers)

Grantsville Volunteer Fire Department
178 Springs Road
Grantsville, MD 21536

Oakland Community Center (The Armory)
14 N. 8th Street
Oakland, MD 21550

Harford County (4 centers)

Edgewood Recreation Center
1980 Brookside Drive
Edgewood, MD 21040

Havre de Grace Activity Center
351 Lewis Lane
Havre de Grace, MD 21078

Jarrettsville Fire Hall
3825 Federal Hill Road
Jarrettsville, MD 21084

McFaul Activity Center
525 W. MacPhail Road
Bel Air, MD 21014

Howard County (5 centers)

Bain 50+ Center
5470 Ruth Keeton Way
Columbia, 21044

Gary J Arthur Center
2400 Route 97
Cooksville, 21723

Meadowbrook Athletic Complex
5001 Meadowbrook Lane
Ellicott City, MD 21043

North Laurel Community Center
9411 Whiskey Bottom Road
Laurel, MD 20723

St. John Baptist Church
9055 Tamar Drive
Columbia, MD 21045

Kent County (1 center)

Kent County Public Library
408 High Street
Chestertown, MD 21620

Montgomery County (14 centers)

Activity Center at Bohrer Park
506 S. Frederick Avenue
Gaithersburg, MD 20877

Bauer Drive Community Recreation Center
14625 Bauer Drive
Rockville, MD 20853

Damascus Community Recreation Center
25520 Oak Drive
Damascus, MD 20872

Executive Office Building
101 Monroe Street
Rockville, MD 20850

Germantown Community Recreation Center
18905 Kingsview Road
Germantown, MD 20874

Jane E. Lawton Community Recreation Center
4301 Willow Lane
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Marilyn J. Praisner Community Recreation Center
14906 Old Columbia Pike
Burtonsville, MD 20866

Mid-County Community Recreation Center
2004 Queensguard Road
Silver Spring, MD 20906

Nancy H. Dacek North Potomac Community
Recreation Center
13850 Travilah Road
Rockville, MD 20850

Potomac Community Recreation Center
11315 Falls Road
Potomac, MD 20854

Sandy Spring Volunteer Fire Department
17921 Brooke Road
Sandy Spring, MD 20860

Silver Spring Civic Building at Veterans Plaza
One Veterans Place
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Wheaton Library & Community Recreation Center
11701 Georgia Avenue
Wheaton, MD 20902

White Oak Community Recreation Center
1700 April Lane
Silver Spring, MD 20904

Prince George's County (11 centers)

Bowie Gymnasium
4100 Northview Drive
Bowie, MD 20716

College Park Community Center
5051 Pierce Avenue
College Park, MD 20740

Kentland Community Center
2413 Pinebrook Avenue
Hyattsville, MD 20785

Laurel – Beltsville Senior Activity Center
7120 Contee Road
Laurel, MD 20707

Life Covenant Christian Ministries
15522 Livingston Road
Accokeek, MD 20607

Rollingcrest-Chillum Community Center
6120 Sargent Road
Chillum, MD 20782

Southern Area Aquatic and Recreation Complex
13601 Missouri Avenue
Brandywine, MD 20613

Southern Regional Technology and Recreation Complex
7007 Bock Road
Fort Washington, MD 20744

Suitland Community Park School Center
5600 Regency Lane
Forestville, MD 20747

Upper Marlboro Community Center
5400 Marlboro Race Track Road
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

Wayne K. Curry Sports and Learning Complex
8001 Sheriff Road
Landover, MD 20785

Queen Anne's County (2 centers)

County Office Building, Conference Room
110 Vincit Street
Centreville, MD 21617

Kent Island Fire Department
1610 Main Street
Chester, MD 21619

Saint Mary's County (3 centers)

Bay District Fire House
46900 South Shangri-La Drive
Lexington Park, MD 20653

Hollywood Firehouse Main Building
24801 Three Notch Road
Hollywood, MD 20636

Mechanicsville Firehouse
28165 Hills Club Road
Mechanicsville, MD 20659

Somerset County (1 center)

Somerset County Technical High School
7994 Tawes Campus Drive
Westover, MD 21871

Talbot County (1 center)

Easton Fire Hall
315 Aurora Park Drive
Easton, MD 21601

Washington County (3 centers)

Boonsboro American Legion
710 N Main Street
Boonsboro, MD 21713

Smithsburg Branch Library
66 W. Water Street
Smithsburg, MD 21783

Washington County Election Center
17718 Virginia Avenue
Hagerstown, MD 21740

Wicomico County (2 centers)

First Baptist Church – Family Life and Cultural Center
528 Booth Street
Salisbury MD 21801

Wicomico Youth and Civic Center
500 Glen Avenue
Salisbury, MD 21804

Worcester County (1 center)

Roland E. Powell Convention Center
4001 Coastal Hwy
Ocean City, MD 21842

2024 Primary and General Elections Determination of Early Voting Centers

	Number of Registered Voters ¹	Number of Early Voting Centers ²	Number of Optional Early Voting Centers ³	Total Number of Early Voting Centers
ALLEGANY	43,762	1	0	1
ANNE ARUNDEL	411,927	9	1	10
BALTIMORE CITY	393,864	7	1	8
BALTIMORE COUNTY	567,395	11	0	11
CALVERT	68,385	2	1	3
CAROLINE	21,840	1	0	1
CARROLL	128,429	3	0	3
CECIL	71,477	2	0	2
CHARLES	122,082	3	0	3
DORCHESTER	23,043	1	0	1
FREDERICK	198,165	3	1	4
GARRETT	20,615	1	1	2
HARFORD	191,177	3	1	4
HOWARD	232,343	5	0	5
KENT	13,929	1	0	1
MONTGOMERY	676,661	13	1	14
PRINCE GEORGE'S	597,880	11	0	11
QUEEN ANNE'S	40,044	1	1	2
SAINT MARY'S	74,902	2	1	3
SOMERSET	14,173	1	0	1
TALBOT	28,700	1	0	1
WASHINGTON	99,396	2	1	2
WICOMICO	65,666	2	0	2
WORCESTER	42,577	1	0	1
STATEWIDE	4,147,432	87	10	97

¹ As of September 12, 2023. See Regulation 33.17.02.01A of Code of Maryland Regulations.

² Election Law Article, § 10-301.1(b), Annotated Code of Maryland specifies the number of early voting centers for each county. A county with fewer than 50,000 registered voters shall have 1 early voting center. A county with at least 50,000 registered voters but fewer than 100,000 registered voters shall have 2 early voting centers. A county with at least 100,000 registered voters but fewer than 200,000 registered voters shall have 3 early voting centers. A county with at least 200,000 registered voters but fewer than 300,000 registered voters shall have 5 early voting centers. A county with at least 300,000 registered voters but fewer than 400,000 registered voters shall have 7 early voting centers. A county with at least 400,000 registered voters but fewer than 500,000 registered voters shall have 9 early voting centers. A county with at least 500,000 registered voters but fewer than 600,000 registered voters shall have 11 early voting centers. A county with at least 600,000 registered voters shall have 13 early voting centers.

³ In addition to the early voting centers required by Election Law Article, §10-301.1(b), each county may establish one additional early voting center if, first, the local board and governing body of the county agree to establish an additional early voting center; and then the State Board approves of the establishment of an additional early voting center.

IL Written Testimony - SB 18 - Favorable.pdf

Uploaded by: Chris Kelter

Position: FAV



SB 18 : Election Law - Early Voting - Number of Days

Testimony of the Maryland Independent Living Network

SUPPORT

Senate Education, Energy & the Environment Committee, February 5, 2025

The Maryland Independent Living Network is a coalition of the Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council and the seven Maryland-based Centers for Independent Living (CIL). CILs are created by federal law. CILs work to enhance the civil rights and quality of services for people with disabilities. There are seven CILs located throughout Maryland, operated by and for people with disabilities. CILs provide Information and Referral, Advocacy, Peer Support, Independent Living Skills training, and Transition Services to individuals with disabilities in their communities.

The Independent Living Network submits this written testimony in **support** of SB 18.

SB 18, if enacted, would increase the number of days that an early voting center remains open prior to an election. Specifically, the bill requires an early voting center to remain open up until the Monday before an election.

When the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed 31 years ago, it provided historic civil rights protections for disabled Americans and provided the four core outcomes of full participation, equal opportunity, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency. Full participation should include disability inclusive democracy. Americans with disabilities still face barriers in fully participating in many aspects of their lives including participation in democratic elections.

Expanding opportunities to participate in the democratic process would permit more people with disabilities to participate in democratic elections by allowing them to exercise their right to vote.

Increasing the number of days that an early voting center is open increases access to voting. This is of particular importance to people with disabilities. People with disabilities would benefit from the bills provisions by having more time and opportunity to exercise the right to vote.

The Maryland Independent Living Network appreciates the consideration of these comments.

The Maryland Independent Living Network strongly **supports** SB 18 and urges a **favorable** report.

Contact Information:

Chris Kelter, Executive Director
Accessible Resources for Independence
443-713-3914
ckelter@arinow.org

Danielle Bustos, MDYLF Coordinator
Independence Now
240-898-2189
dbustos@innow.org

SB-18-250203-Early-Voting.pdf

Uploaded by: Christine Hunt

Position: FAV

Christine Hunt and Jay Crouthers
1014 Dockser Drive
Crownsville, MD 21032

February 3, 2025

Maryland General Assembly
Members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee
Annapolis, MD

RE: SB 18 – Election Law – Early Voting – Number of Days

Dear Senators,

We support and respectfully request that you vote for the above bill.

As election judges, and number among those who have cast their votes during early voting, we know the time and effort and the number of people that are needed to cover the judge positions required for an election day. It is also a long day for the judges who volunteer.

At early voting sites that we have visited, they are mostly empty of voters – at least in the middle of the day.

In Anne Arundel County, we are always short of judges, and assume other counties are as well. Reducing the number of days of early voting will enable the Board of Elections to more easily cover the positions needed, in part, because judges may be more inclined to volunteer for a shorter commitment.

Sincerely,

Christine Hunt and Jay Crouthers

SB 0018 Fewer EV days.pdf

Uploaded by: SHARON CARRICK

Position: FAV



Ella Ennis, Legislative Chairman
Maryland Federation of Republican Women
PO Box 6040, Annapolis MD 21401
Email: eee437@comcast.net

February 3, 2025

The Honorable Brian Feldman, Chairman
and Members of the Education, Energy and Environment Committee
Senate of Maryland
Annapolis, Maryland

RE: **SB0018** – Altering the Number of Days of Early Voting - **FAVORABLE**

Dear Chairman Feldman and Committee Members,

The Maryland Federation of Republican Women supports SB0018 to reduce the number of days of Early Voting by 3 days for both the Primary and General Elections. This will save money for the State, all 23 counties, and Baltimore City in this time of serious budget constraints.

While reducing costs, this change will also reduce stress on the local Election Boards, with fewer days to staff and fewer election judges to find. For candidates and our political parties, it will reduce the number of days they will need to cover the polls.

Eliminating 3 weekdays of Early Voting still provides those who work Monday-to-Friday an alternative in-person voting opportunity for 5 days, including a weekend. This is a win/win for Maryland voters.

We urge a **FAVORABLE** report for **SB0018**.

Sincerely,
Ella Ennis
Legislative Chairman

2025 SB0018 Testimony For 2025-02-05.pdf

Uploaded by: Alan Lang

Position: UNF

SB0018 – Favorable

Honorable Senators

I support reducing the number of days on which early voting centers are required to be open before a primary or general election. By requiring early voting centers to be open through the second Monday, rather than the Thursday before the election, I believe, but have no evidence, that this bill would:

- reduce the costs of early voting
- give the boards of election more time to process the results and prepare for the one-day primary or general election
- make it easier to get volunteers to staff the early voting centers
 - It should be easier to get crews for 5 days instead of 8 days
 - Instead of two crews for 4 days, they could have 1 crew for 5 days or two crews of 2 days and 3 days, each

It would have been beneficial if there had been a fiscal impact study to show a justification for reducing the number of days. Has the number of early voters declined as the use of absentee ballots increased? What benefits would occur if early voting was decreased by 3 days, and what, if any, drawbacks would occur by decreasing early voting by 3 days?

Was there any analysis as to how many days early voting should be? Would changing early voting to 6 days or 4 days have been more cost effective than reducing it to 5 days?

Please enter a favorable report for SB0018.

Alan Lang
45 Marys Mount Road
Harwood, Maryland 20776
410-336-9745
Alanlang1@verizon.net

Legislative District 30B
February 5, 2025

SB0018-EEE_MACo_OPP.pdf

Uploaded by: Kevin Kinnally

Position: UNF



Senate Bill 18

Election Law - Early Voting - Number of Days

MACo Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Education, Energy, and the Environment
Committee

Date: February 5, 2025

From: Kevin Kinnally

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **OPPOSES** SB 18, which extends early voting by four additional days by requiring early voting centers to remain open through the second Monday before an election instead of the Thursday before.

Counties remain committed to accessible elections, but this bill adds significant unfunded costs to local Boards of Elections, straining already limited local budgets as counties contend with rising obligations under the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, growing demands for public safety and infrastructure, and at least \$140 million in proposed state cost shifts in the governor's fiscal plan.

The bill imposes millions of dollars in new costs per election cycle, with the most significant impact on counties operating multiple early voting centers. Staffing, extended facility rentals, utilities, maintenance, security, and election materials—including ballot printing and voting machine upkeep—all demand local funding. With counties already facing increasing fiscal pressures, this expansion would compete for limited local funds against education, health, public safety, roadway maintenance, and other essential public services.

Counties struggle to recruit and retain election judges, and extending early voting exacerbates this challenge. Many early voting centers operate in leased or shared spaces, and expanding operations creates scheduling conflicts that force counties to secure alternative locations at a higher cost. Extending early voting also compresses the election timeline, reducing the time available to canvass ballots and prepare for Election Day.

Maryland already provides one of the most accessible voting systems in the nation, including eight days of early voting, no-excuse mail-in voting with permanent enrollment, in-person Election Day voting, and secure ballot drop boxes in every jurisdiction. While counties support election access, mandating additional early voting days forces counties to absorb millions in new costs while managing increasing budget pressures and competing demands for essential services.

For these reasons, MACo urges the Committee to issue an **UNFAVORABLE** report on SB 18.

SB 18 - Election Law – Early Voting Days – Number

Uploaded by: Morgan Drayton

Position: UNF

February 5, 2025

Testimony on SB 18
Election Law – Early Voting Days – Number of Days
Education, Energy, and the Environment

Position: Unfavorable

Common Cause Maryland is in opposition of SB 18, which would reduce the number of early voting days

Democracy works best when all eligible persons are able to participate and make their voices heard. Early voting allows more opportunities to get to the polls – easing or eliminating problems for those who cannot make it to vote on Election Day.

Early voting has proven to be tremendously popular in Maryland. Data released by the State Board of Elections shows that, during the 2024 General Election, we broke the state record for single-day turnout surpassing the previous unofficial single-day early voting record (set during the 2020 General Election). We expect the program to grow more popular as the number of early vote center locations increase and become more accessible.

As the state strives to engage more voters in our elections, it is important that we continue to provide opportunities for voters to cast their ballots at a time and on a schedule that works with busy lives, long work hours, and other barriers to voting on Election Day.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge an unfavorable report from the committee.