

Testimony For HB0067

Honorable Delegates

Please vote for HB0067.

This is a voter Integrity issue that several of us supported and testified in person at the hearing last year. We stated that not requiring signature verification would allow invalid voting if the absentee ballots were intercepted and used by others to vote as if they were the person to whom the ballot was sent. Other states have shown that this integrity risk does exist with absentee ballots.

However, the Attorney General, Common Cause, the Arc, and Maryland Retired School Personnel Association all claimed that the risk of denying a valid ballot for not matching the signature would be greater than the chance of fraud and that this bill discriminates against minorities, elderly, poor, and disabled.

The Maryland Association of Elected Officials (MAEO) were against it primarily because it was an emergency bill last year and there would not be enough time to get needed equipment, software, and procedures in place. Perhaps in a non-election year, and this not being an emergency bill, they may not have these objections.

I would think that if MAEO does not have serious objections to this bill, it would offset the objections of the others that testified against the bill. They should have a better idea whether the hardware and software needed to process signature verifications would cause any false rejections from minorities, elderly, poor, and disabled.

Hopefully, those with knowledge of these verification tools can allay the fears of the groups testifying against this bill.

Please vote for HB0067.

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