



Maryland Association of Election Officials

Representing the Local Election Boards of the State of Maryland

February 18, 2025

Delegate Vanessa Atterbeary, Chair
Maryland House Ways and Means Committee
Room 131, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

HB781 - Information

Dear Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and Committee Members,

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

MAEO appreciates the intent behind House Bill 781 to improve voting access for elderly voters and voters with disabilities. We note that Maryland election judges already receive training on assisting voters with diverse needs, ensuring accessibility without requiring individuals to disclose personal information. We offer a program that allows anyone to choose to sit and wait for their turn to check in rather than standing in line, if they so choose. Additionally, any voter, regardless of ability or disability, has access to a Ballot Marking Device in the polling place, an accessible option and alternative to voters marking their ballots by hand.

We also wish to provide information on potential legal considerations related to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Under the ADA, election workers cannot ask voters if they have a disability, and Maryland does not require voter ID, making age verification impractical. Additionally, the bill's requirement to **segregate** voters into dedicated expedited lines could raise privacy concerns or create unintended barriers if voters feel pressured to disclose a disability.

MAEO remains committed to facilitating accessible elections and appreciates the opportunity to provide information on election administration considerations related to this legislation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.