

Testimony Against HB0317

Honorable Delegates

Please vote against HB0317.

Has anyone done a study showing that this service is wanted by a sufficient number of the public and if desired, can curbside voting be done in a cost effective and secure manner? If one receives a ballot by mail, prepares it, and is driven to, or takes public transportation to, a drop box, isn't that essentially "curbside" voting?

In the 2024 fiscal report, it was estimated that local government expenditures would increase by at least \$286,000 in FY 2026, and by at least \$247,000 annually thereafter. There is no cost estimate for the scaled down pilot approach in the 2025 pilot bill.

This bill does not discuss the logistics of getting the voting equipment setup outside, and the physical security needed to protect the equipment from the elements. The blind may need a ballot marking device that contains a headset and keypad or blind voters and voters with low vision could vote by listening to the ballot selections and by using the keypad. They may also choose to use the high contrast and large print functions of the voting unit. Will these features be usable while sitting in a car or van?

It would seem easier to use the "Request a mail-in ballot" process than to be driven to the one site in each of the three counties participating in the curbside voting pilot. One's ballot can be mailed or printed from SBE's website. If one has a disability and cannot mark the ballot independently, SBE offers an online tool to help voters mark their ballot. With this tool, most voters with disabilities can make selections without help. If one would like to use this online tool, one should request a mail-in ballot and check the box saying that you want to print your ballot from SBE's website

This bill seems to be a solution in search of a problem when the State website for Access by Voters with Disabilities seems to address most of the situations described by those who testified in favor of this bill during the House debate. See (<https://www.elections.maryland.gov/voting/accessibility.html>).

I believe the costs to offer curbside voting outweighs the benefits to set it up, even in a pilot mode, so please enter an unfavorable report about HB0317

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

February 4, 2025