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TESTIMONY ON HB#/0317- POSITION: FAVORABLE

Election Law - Curbside Voting - Pilot Program

TO: Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and members of the Ways and Means Committee
FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#/0317, **Election Law - Curbside Voting - Pilot Program**

The right to vote is one of the most precious rights that citizens have; the opportunity to evaluate candidates and issues and give their opinion, via that vote, to whom they wish to have as their representative in a government. This bill will permit Maryland to evaluate a system of voting that is currently used in twenty-seven states and the District of Columbia.

Curbside voting is a method of in-person voting where voters who are unable to physically enter their polling place (e.g., due to a disability) may request that a ballot be brought outside of the polling place to an accessible location such as a vehicle. ¹

The United States Election Assistance Commission has studied the issue and created a Quick Start Guide that defines what it is, how to ensure accessibility, and the best practices to use secure chain of custody processes and other safeguards to collect and process votes cast using curbside voting. ²

This bill will permit Maryland to evaluate implementation of curbside voting in the state by establishing the Curbside Voting Pilot Program testing the viability of curbside voting in the State. The bill accomplishes this goal by establishing requirements governing curbside voting. Lastly, it will require the State Board to report to the General Assembly on the implementation of the Pilot so that further actions might be taken to reject or implement curbside voting as a choice in Maryland.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB#/0317.

¹ https://www.lgbtmap.org/democracy-maps/curbside_voting

²

https://www.eac.gov/sites/default/files/electionofficials/QuickStartGuides/Curbside_Voting_EAC_Quick_Start_Guide_508.pdf