



People on the Go of Maryland

SB 615, Election Law - Petitions and Ballot Questions – Contents, Plain Language Requirement, and Procedures

Altering the information that is required to be included on the signature page of a petition seeking to place a question on the ballot and with a question on the ballot; requiring that a certain summary included on the signature page of a petition seeking to place a question on the ballot and a certain statement about a question on the ballot be written in plain language; requiring certain boards of elections to post the text of ballot measures for at least 90 days before the general election; etc.

Position: Support

Hearing 3/25 at 1:00 p.m.

Sponsored by Senator Kagan

Assigned to: Ways and Means Committee

Written by Cody Drinkwater

Policy Coordinator - People On the Go of Maryland

Honorable Chairperson, and distinguished members of the Ways and Means Committee:

People On the Go of Maryland (POG) is a statewide self-advocacy organization, run for and by those with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (IDD), and our mission is to promote self-advocacy throughout the state.

POG respectfully offers this written testimony in support of SB615, for the following reasons:

- It aims to improve transparency, accessibility, and understanding of ballot questions and petitions.
- It mandates that summaries on petition signature pages and statements about ballot questions be written in plain language. This aligns with efforts to make voting materials more accessible to all voters, including those with disabilities. By requiring plain language for summaries and statements, the changes aim to make ballot questions and petitions more understandable for all voters, including those with disabilities or limited English proficiency.
- By making information more accessible and available for longer periods, the changes encourage greater voter participation and informed decision-making.
- The bill would also alter the required information on signature pages, to ensure consistency and completeness across different petitions.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Should you have any questions, please contact Cody Drinkwater or Mat Rice.

Thank you,

Cody Drinkwater, Policy Coordinator

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