



Maryland Association of Election Officials

Representing the Local Election Boards of the State of Maryland

February 24, 2025

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

HB1110 - Information

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 Maryland. Our members are committed to ensuring the smooth and effective administration of elections and are deeply dedicated to making Maryland elections accessible, secure, and fair.

MAEO wishes to provide information on House Bill 1110, which requires the automatic reinstatement and restoration of voter registration for individuals who have been convicted of a felony and subsequently released from incarceration at a state correctional facility.

As current election law, regulations, and voter registration practices dictate, individual citizens who have been convicted of a felony and are currently incarcerated are not eligible to be registered to vote. For their registrations to be cancelled, data are received from the Administrative Office of the Courts and disseminated to the local boards of elections. Affected voters are then contacted and, unless an error in data transmission has been made, their voter status is changed from Active to Cancelled. When one's voter registration is in Cancelled status, that person is not registered to vote at all and would have to fully reregister were they to become eligible once more in the future. Their registration is not simply suspended in the meantime.

If those individuals who have been released from incarceration were to be reregistered to vote automatically, several questions, if not outright conflicts, pertaining to current voter registration law, regulation, and practice would be raised:

- When individuals register to vote, a signature is required for Statewide Voter Registration Applications or identification is necessary for transactions through the Electronic Voter Registration System. How will such information and consent be captured and proffered if one's registration is automatically restored?
- When a voter registers for the first time, including when they reregister after a Cancelled status, identification and its verification is required to become an active voter. If individuals of this particular circumstance are automatically reinstated as active voters, how will the burden of their ID verification be met in order for their registration to be completed?
- Through other state agencies, e.g. the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) or the Maryland Health Benefits Exchange (MHBE), an "opt-out" automatic voter registration system currently exists, within which, individuals must proactively select not to register to vote if they so choose. Will individuals released from incarceration be given this same opportunity and will their registration transactions be able to look similar to those completed through the MVA or MHBE?

MAEO appreciates the purpose of this bill in order to expand the franchise of the vote and to have an inclusive, participatory democracy, yet wishes to provide this information so as to clarify potential conflicts and questions that this legislation may raise.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or need further information.