



# Maryland Association of Election Officials

## Representing the Local Election Boards of the State of Maryland

January 21, 2025

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

### **HB52 - 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 wishes to provide information on House Bill 52, which proposes a constitutional amendment allowing counties the choice to lower the voting age for board of education elections.

If such an amendment to the Maryland Constitution were to pass and a county chose to lower the voting age to 16 instead of 18 for board of education contests, local boards of elections would experience several operational impacts. For each voter eligible to vote solely in the board of education contest, a separate ballot style for each precinct containing *only that contest* would be required during the primary and general elections. With the current voting system this would result in additional costs for the creation, printing, and procurement of unique ballots styles. It would also increase logistical challenges in managing ballot materials. Furthermore, additional training for election judges and staff would be necessary to handle these unique ballots and ensure compliance with election procedures. Moreover, software enhancement for the pollbooks used for in-person voting may be necessary.

The introduction of single-contest ballots could also create confusion for younger voters, who may not fully understand why they are receiving a different ballot than other voters. This confusion could lead to *increased provisional voting* and additional inquiries at polling places, further complicating the work of election judges and potentially slowing down the voting process.

While MAEO appreciates the intent of expanding civic participation to younger voters, we respectfully encourage consideration of the administrative burdens this may place on local boards of elections.

We thank you for your time and consideration of this information in your deliberations on House Bill 52.