

Subject: Favorable SB 929 / HB 1097 : Workgroup on Mail-in Ballot Accessibility

Date: March 25, 2025

From: National Federation of the Blind of Maryland

15 Charles Plaza, #3002

[President@nfbmd.org](mailto:President@nfbmd.org)

To: House Ways and Means Committee

The Members of the National Federation of the Blind urge the House Ways and Means Committee to vote in favor of SB 929 / HB 1097, a bill that establishes a workgroup to study the accessibility of mail-in ballots.

The issue of accessibility to mail-in ballots has never been adequately studied. The General Assembly has been wrangling with this problem for at least 3 years. This is not only an opportunity to study this question but also is the chance to make recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly by the end of the year.

The workgroup established in the bill is well balanced. This workgroup will consist of experts in voting accessibility, election security, and cybersecurity. There will also be representatives of disabled people from the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland, the Arc of Maryland, the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council, and the Association of the Deaf. Common Cause Maryland and the League of Women Voters of Maryland are also part of the group. The workgroup also has the appropriate representatives from the General Assembly and the Executive Branch. Surely, this well-rounded group should be able to make concrete recommendations by the end of 2025.

Voters with disabilities do not currently have a secret ballot if they must use the mail-in ballot voting process. This discrimination must come to an end. There must be a balance between security concerns and the right to vote privately and independently. Please vote in favor of SB 929 / HB 1097. Let's solve this problem once and for all.