

March 30, 2026

Testimony on HB 1448
Municipal Elections – Information on Candidates and Voting Procedures and Locations
Government, Labor, and Elections

Position: Favorable

Common Cause Maryland is in favor of HB 1448, which would create new reporting requirements around municipal elections.

HB 1448 would introduce small but meaningful reporting requirements around the administration of our municipal elections. By requiring municipalities to submit candidate qualifications, lists of qualified candidates, and clear information about how and where to vote to the State Board of Elections for prompt publication, HB 1448 increases transparency, accessibility, and creates uniformity for voters across jurisdictions.

We know that compared to state and federal elections, it can be difficult for voters to find reliable, centralized information about candidate eligibility, ballot content, and logistics on how to vote in Maryland’s municipal elections. We also know that many registered voters check-out of the political space in the time between the presidential and midterm elections, and that the fact that it’s so difficult to find up-to-date information on municipal elections likely contributes to low turn-out rates. HB 1448 will help to create more predictable timelines and transparency around municipal elections, not just for the voters, but also for any interested would-be candidates.

We support Ranked Choice Voting Maryland's suggestion to amend SB0848/HB1448 to ensure tabulation procedures for municipalities that have adopted or use ranked choice voting are available to the public and reviewed by the State Board of Elections for compliance.

Suggested Amendment: ANY MUNICIPALITY THAT CONDUCTS ELECTIONS USING RANKED-CHOICE VOTING SHALL PROVIDE REGULATIONS ON THE TABULATION OF RANKED BALLOTS TO THE STATE BOARD FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL FOR USE WITH STATE VOTING EQUIPMENT.

This is a very small change that will help ensure that the public is able to keep up with and hopefully make their voices heard within our municipal elections. For these reasons, we request a favorable report on HB 1448.