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Executive Nominations Committee

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

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The Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee
SB 845 – Maryland Voter Registration List Accuracy and Integrity Act
Statement of Support by Bill Sponsor Senator Mary Beth Carozza

Thank you Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and my fellow members of the distinguished Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee for this opportunity to present Senate Bill 845, the Maryland Voter Registration List Accuracy and Integrity Act, as amended.

I appreciate the willingness of State Board of Elections Administrator Jared DeMarinis to work with me in amending SB 845 to focus on an area that can be strengthened in the removal of deceased Maryland voters off the Maryland State Voter Registration list.

Senate Bill 845 would improve the process and timeline for ensuring that deceased Maryland voters once confirmed are removed from the statewide voter registration list. Local boards of elections already are required to remove deceased voters once the board receives a report of the death from an official government agency, and this legislation would require the Maryland Department of Health to broaden the report sent to the State Board of Elections including those who identified as out of state residents but are Maryland residents and who were reported deceased outside the State but identified as Maryland residents. If the State Board of Elections determines that a local board is not in compliance with the timely removal of confirmed deceased voters, the local board must develop a corrective action plan and undergo mandatory training of staff.

We all can agree that accurate voter rolls comprised of only eligible Maryland voters serve as the backbone of a secure election system. Election officials have an affirmative duty to maintain the accuracy of these voter rolls. The effort to work with local elected officials and the State Board of Election is a non-partisan effort to increase trust in Maryland's election system.

During the Interim, I met with constituents and other Maryland voters who have been working to increase the accuracy of Maryland's voter rolls and who have shared their findings with local boards of elections and the State Board of Elections.

Our Maryland State Voter Registration Database is considered critical infrastructure; it is essential to manage this system with a keen eye on vulnerabilities and potential threats. Voter rolls are a dynamic system. Therefore, our primary concern is not the inaccuracies at any given moment, but rather addressing the vulnerabilities in the system that lead to these inaccuracies.

I appreciate the serious effort that many of my constituents and Maryland voters have made to share data and information regarding inaccuracies with Maryland's voter rolls and their recommendation to address vulnerabilities in our election system. I plan to continue to work to improve the accuracy of Maryland's voter rolls, and I believe SB 845 takes a small step in good faith to improve the process for removing confirmed deceased voters from the Maryland voter registration list.

Accurate voter rolls are essential to fair, transparent, and secure elections. This is a narrow, non-partisan bill to move deceased Maryland voters off the voter rolls in a timely fashion that strengthens public trust and integrity in our elections.

I thank you for your kind attention and consideration, and I respectfully request a favorable report on SB 845.