
SB 236 | FAVORABLE

EDUCATION, ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE | 11 FEB 2026

Our Perspective

Veterans for Maryland Voters represents a community of Maryland veterans from all walks of life—spanning from constitutional conservatives to progressives. We are united by a shared belief that Marylanders deserve an election system that is as functional and resilient as the people it serves. Having taken an oath to defend our democracy, we view our support for election modernization as a continuation of that service. We want a system that is fair, transparent, and representative of every citizen's voice.

Modern Tools for Modern Elections

Maryland is seeing a clear shift toward election reform. Following the long-term success of Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) in Takoma Park, residents in Greenbelt recently voted overwhelmingly to adopt a similar system. As more jurisdictions look to innovate, we need to ensure that the "back-end" technology used to audit and tabulate these results is standardized and reliable.

For those of us who served, we understand that a mission is only as successful as the equipment supporting it. Election administrators are the stewards of our democracy, and they shouldn't be forced to "reinvent the wheel" or navigate a patchwork of unvetted tools. SB 236 provides a common-sense solution by requiring the State Board of Elections (SBE) to certify supporting technology at the state level.

Protecting the Votes of Those Who Serve

One perspective we wish to highlight is that of our active-duty service members and overseas voters. These voters frequently have to cast their ballots weeks in advance from remote or austere environments. When election technology is fragmented or outdated, it is often these "long-distance" votes that are most at risk of being lost in the shuffle or rendered "wasted" if a system cannot properly handle their preferences.

By standardizing and certifying the technology used for tabulation and auditing, SB 236 ensures that every vote—whether cast at a local precinct in Maryland or from a base overseas—is handled with the same high level of accuracy and security.

Efficiency and Fiscal Responsibility

This bill isn't just about new technology; it's about good government.

- **Cost Savings:** State-level certification prevents 24 different local boards from having to conduct their own individual reviews, saving taxpayer money and administrative time.
- **Interim Readiness:** While we are encouraged by the State Board's timeline for a new, RCV-ready system in 2028, SB 236 addresses the immediate need for supporting tools—like electronic pollbooks and audit software—needed for the 2027 local election cycle.

Conclusion

Veterans for All Voters supports SB 236 because it brings much-needed consistency and professional standards to our election infrastructure. It empowers our local officials with vetted, trusted tools and reinforces the integrity of our democratic process.

We stand ready to support the Committee's work and offer the veteran community's perspective on how to keep Maryland's elections secure and functional. We respectfully urge a **favorable report** on SB 236.

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