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**Statement of the Maryland Federation of  
National Active and Retired Federal Employees  
Senate Education, Energy & the Environment Committee Hearing,  
February 11, 2026  
On SB 73 - Election Law – Polling Place Procedures –  
Voting by Elderly Voters and Voters with Disabilities  
(Accessible and Expedited Voting Act of Maryland)**

**(Position – FAV)**

Good Afternoon, Chairman Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan and members of the Education, Energy & the Environment Committee. I am Robert Doyle, Chair of the State Legislative Committee of the Maryland National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE), representing approximately 317,000 federal annuitants and employees in Maryland. For the continuing benefit of all Maryland seniors and disabled persons – our members and all others -- we support and ask you for a favorable report on SB 73, Election Law – Polling Place Procedures – Voting by Elderly Voters and Voters with Disabilities (Accessible

and Expedited Voting Act of Maryland). We thank Senator Arthur Ellis for introducing this Bill.

The right to vote, which is a fundamental right and a foundation of our Democracy, remains more important than ever. We endorse the MD League of Women Voters view that “democratic government depends upon informed and active citizen participation, and that voting is a fundamental citizen right that must be guaranteed by law.”<sup>1</sup>

SB 73 will provide substantial strides in that regard, by requiring the State Board of Elections (SBE) to issue guidelines for local boards to accommodate and expedite voting for older people and people with disabilities through dedicated lines, signs and priority seating, and specific provisions for high-traffic early voting centers, and to establish election judge training for these new guidelines.

We have no doubt that election judges and election workers at Maryland polling places have done their best to help voters who need special assistance because they are elderly or disabled. I have worked as an Election Judge in several

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<sup>1</sup> Written Statement of Linda Kohn, League of Women Voters, on SB 66, Election Law – Polling Place Procedures – Voting By Elderly Voters and Voters With Disabilities (Accessible and Expedited Voting Act of Maryland), MD Senate Education, Energy and Environment Committee Hearing, February 5, 2025.

recent elections and I know how hard my colleagues and I worked. But there are still instances where someone will fall through the cracks. For example, in the 2024 elections, I voted at an early voting polling place in Anne Arundel county and saw several older voters get discouraged and leave because they had no place to sit and wait for the long lines of voters.

Senator Ellis noted at the February 5, 2025 Education, Energy and the Environment Committee Hearing for his bill last year (SB) 66 that some older and disabled voters who showed up to the polls last year asked for accommodations but were told they had to wait in line with other voters. Senator Ellis declared that it's "unacceptable" to have so many voters disenfranchised. He noted "They should have a choice to vote the way they want to vote, and not to be insulted by election workers or anybody else telling them ... 'Please go away, you're not needed here.'" We agree.

Finally, we note that SB 73 has the important requirement that the SBE will submit a report to the General Assembly after each election discussing any challenges to its guidelines, an analysis of how well the guidelines worked, a summary of feedback received by local boards on the effectiveness of the new guidelines, and any recommendations to improve the guidelines. This will help to

ensure that senior voters and voters with disabilities continue to receive the treatment they deserve to maintain their fundamental right to participate in our democracy.

When the SBE begins the work to establish these guidelines, we at MD NARFE look forward to participation in whatever public rulemaking process the SBE implements regarding the new guidelines

We respectfully ask that you give a favorable report to SB 73 as an important step in ensuring that MD seniors and persons with disabilities can maintain their fundamental right to vote.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate today.

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