

Michelle Feldman Testimony in Support of SB 727
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
February 25, 1:00 p.m.

Chair and members of the committee,

My name is Michelle Feldman, and I am the Campaigns Director at the Mobile Voting Project, a nonprofit dedicated to expanding voting access through secure smartphone voting.

Today, we face new and evolving barriers to voting, but through great leaps innovation, we can responsibly address these roadblocks.

Mobile voting is not theoretical. Nationally, 32 states allow for specific groups of voters to return their ballots electronically. Mobile voting has been piloted in 11 states—red and blue—including Colorado, West Virginia, Virginia, Oregon, Washington, Utah, South Carolina, Montana, Alabama, and North Carolina. Most recently, Anchorage and Juneau, Alaska used mobile voting for its municipal elections.

The results are significant: turnout doubled among military and overseas voters in Denver, tripled in a special district in Seattle, and in South Carolina ballot returns increased from 9.8% to 55%. In addition, the streamlined process saved dozens of hours of manual work for election staff.

Mobile voting also strengthens transparency and verification. Here is how it works:

First, a voter downloads the secure application through their board of elections website.

Second, they verify their identity through multi-factor authentication.

Third, they mark their ballot on their device. When they submit, three things happen at once: the ballot is encrypted, anonymized, and the voter receives a tracking code.

Next, the digital ballot goes to election officials who immediately take the ballot offline, decrypt it, print it onto paper, and mix it with all other paper ballots for tabulation.

Finally, Using their tracking code, the voter can verify that their ballot was cast, recorded, and counted correctly.

This bill ensures that, if used, mobile voting meets the highest standards of security, transparency, and efficiency while expanding access for Maryland voters.

Thank you for your consideration.