

Andy Ellis
Seeking the Green Party nomination for Governor
SB 236
FAV

I am a Green Party candidate for Governor of Maryland and a technology professional with 15 years of experience in the sector. I come to this bill from both sides -- as someone who understands how technology systems should be managed, and as a participant in the elections those systems support.

Public trust in elections depends on public confidence in the systems that administer them. SB0236 would require the State Board of Elections to develop regulations for certifying election-supporting technology, conduct annual evaluations of certified systems, and establish a process for decertifying technology that no longer meets standards. These are basic accountability measures that should be uncontroversial.

Voting machines, voter registration databases, ballot tabulation systems, and election management software are all critical infrastructure. Yet Maryland has no ongoing certification and review process for any of them. SB0236 fixes that.

This matters now more than ever. As Maryland localities explore ranked choice voting and other election innovations, they will need tabulation and auditing systems they can confidently point voters to. A state-level certification framework ensures that those tools are vetted before they reach voters -- reducing duplicate work for local boards and giving election administrators confidence in the technology they deploy.

The Green Party has championed ranked choice voting for decades -- not because it advantages third parties, but because it produces better outcomes for voters. We bring that same principle to election technology: the systems that count votes should be subject to rigorous, ongoing, transparent evaluation -- not because we distrust election administrators, but because public confidence in elections depends on it.

Every Marylander deserves to know that their vote is counted accurately by systems that have been rigorously evaluated.

I encourage this committee to provide a favorable report on SB0236.