

**SB 236/HB 1010**: Election Law - Certification of Election-Supporting Technology - Regulations, Review, and Evaluation: Please vote **TO OPPOSE** this bill.

Dear Education, Energy & the Environment Committee:

I am writing to respectfully **oppose SB 236/HB 1010**, which alters the certification, regulation, and review process for election-supporting technology in Maryland.

The bill states: "...(A) (1) IN THIS SECTION, "ELECTION-SUPPORTING TECHNOLOGY" MEANS **ANY EQUIPMENT OR TECHNOLOGY THAT IS: (I) COMPATIBLE WITH A METHOD OF CASTING AND TABULATING VOTES IN WHICH VOTERS RANK CANDIDATES IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE AND VOTES ARE TABULATED IN A MANNER THAT REFLECTS VOTER PREFERENCE**; AND (II) DESIGNED FOR USE IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS, INCLUDING: 1. ELECTRONIC POLLBOOKS; 2. RISK-LIMITING AUDIT TOOLS; AND 3. ANY SOFTWARE USED FOR PREPARING, PRESENTING, OR REPORTING THE RESULTS PRODUCED BY A VOTING SYSTEM..."

While often presented as a reform, **ranked-choice voting** introduces unnecessary complexity into the voting process, making elections harder to understand for voters and more difficult to administer accurately. Elections should be simple, transparent, and intuitive, so voters can clearly understand how their vote is cast and counted. Ranked Choice Voting undermines that clarity.

**Ranked-choice voting** can also delay election results, require multiple rounds of tabulation, and increase the likelihood of voter confusion, ballot errors, and administrative mistakes. In close or contested races, these complexities can reduce public confidence in election outcomes—the opposite of what election reform should achieve.

**Ranked Choice Voting** additionally weakens accountability by allowing candidates to win without receiving the most first-choice votes, which can distort voter intent and make election results harder to explain or trust. Voters should be able to easily identify who won, why they won, and how their vote contributed to the outcome.

From an administrative standpoint, implementing **ranked-choice voting** often requires new voting systems, specialized software, extensive voter education campaigns, and additional training for election officials, all at significant taxpayer expense. These costs and burdens are imposed without clear evidence that Ranked Choice Voting improves turnout, fairness, or representation.

**SB 236/HB 1010** introduces unnecessary regulatory complexity, and risks slowing the adoption of secure and effective tools that local election officials rely on to administer elections efficiently. **SB 236/HB 1010 adds overlapping layers of regulation and review** that are likely to increase costs, delay implementation timelines, and reduce flexibility for local election boards—without clear evidence that current safeguards are insufficient.

This bill also raises questions about **local control and accountability**. Counties and municipalities bear primary responsibility for administering elections and are best positioned to assess which tools meet their operational and security needs. Shifting those decisions further away from local administrators risks **one-size-fits-all mandates** that do not reflect on-the-ground realities.

Maryland already conducts elections that are accessible, fair, and secure under a straightforward one-person, one-vote system that voters understand. Rather than introducing experimental voting methods, the State should focus on maintaining election integrity, clarity, and public trust.

Election law should prioritize **clarity, efficiency, proven security standards, and respect for local administration**. **SB 236/HB 1010 moves in the opposite direction by expanding regulation without a clear corresponding benefit to voters or election integrity.**

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to oppose ranked-choice voting and preserve a clear, transparent, and accountable election system for Maryland voters.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Respectfully,  
Trudy Tibbals