



## **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 100**

### **Election Law – Early Voting Centers – Bus Stops**

Hearing Date: February 11, 2026

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Sponsor: Chair, Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee (By Request – Departmental  
– State Board of Elections)

Cross-file: HB 263

position: Support with Amendment

Mat Rice, Executive Director, submits this testimony on behalf of People On The Go Maryland (POG), Maryland's statewide self advocacy and systems advocacy organization run for and by people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. POG supports SB 100 because transportation is a practical barrier to voting for many Marylanders, and this bill takes a clear step to make early voting centers easier to reach. POG respectfully requests a favorable report.

### **Why SB 100 matters**

Early voting is only accessible when people can get to the early voting center safely and on time. For people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, transportation can be the difference between voting and not voting. Many people do not drive and rely on public transportation, paratransit, family, or support staff to travel.

SB 100 requires buses operating on certain fixed local routes to allow passengers to embark and disembark at the entrance of an early voting center when the center is within one-half mile of the route, to the maximum extent practicable and consistent with accessibility requirements. This helps reduce long walks, confusing wayfinding, and safety concerns—especially for voters who may need predictable, clearly marked access points.

## **Friendly amendment to include statewide paratransit-type systems**

POG respectfully offers a friendly amendment to make sure the bill's goal applies to people who rely on statewide paratransit-type systems, not only fixed-route local buses. Many eligible riders use demand-response or complementary paratransit service rather than a fixed-route bus. Including these services would better reflect how many voters with disabilities actually travel to polling locations across Maryland.

Proposed friendly amendment concept (plain language):

- When an early voting center is served by a publicly funded paratransit or demand-response program, the provider should, to the maximum extent practicable and consistent with accessibility and safety requirements, allow riders to be dropped off and picked up at the entrance of the early voting center on early voting days.

Proposed friendly amendment language (draft, for consideration):

- Amend Election Law §10–301.1(e) to apply not only to certain county/municipal fixed local routes, but also to publicly funded paratransit/demand-response services. For example, revise subsection (e)(1)(i) to include additional covered services such as:

“(I) This subsection applies with respect to a fixed-route public bus service funded or operated by the State, a county, or a municipal corporation (or a contractor); and

(II) This subsection also applies with respect to a publicly funded paratransit, demand-response, or complementary paratransit service that provides transportation to members of the public, including riders with disabilities.”

Then revise subsection (e)(2) to clarify that the requirement includes allowing riders to embark/disembark (fixed-route) or be picked up/dropped off (paratransit) at the entrance of the early voting center, to the maximum extent practicable and consistent with accessibility requirements.

POG offers this friendly amendment in the spirit of SB 100's purpose: improving practical access to early voting for more Maryland voters.

## **About People On The Go Maryland**

People On The Go Maryland is a statewide self advocacy and systems advocacy organization run for and by people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. We work to expand self-determination and full community participation, including the right to vote.

## **Conclusion**

SB 100 promotes practical access to early voting centers by addressing a real transportation barrier. With a friendly amendment to include statewide paratransit-type systems, the bill's benefits could reach more voters who rely on accessible transportation. POG respectfully requests a favorable report. Thank you for your time and consideration.

**Contact Information**

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