



TESTIMONY

COMMITTEE: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment

DATE: February 24, 2026

POSITION: Favorable

BILL: SB 727

The Maryland Municipal League supports SB 727, which authorizes municipalities to use qualified electronic transmission systems for municipal elections subject to strict security and integrity standards. Municipal elections often operate independently from State and federal cycles and with limited resources. This legislation provides a carefully structured option for municipalities to modernize election administration in a way that can enhance voter access while maintaining public trust.

The bill establishes a high bar for security. Any electronic transmission system must incorporate end-to-end encryption, auditability, multifactor authentication, air-gapping of critical systems, biometric or equivalent identity verification, and a process for printing decrypted ballots to create a paper record. These safeguards ensure that electronic transmission is not synonymous with reduced oversight; instead, the bill requires layered protections and preserves a tangible paper trail for accountability and auditing. SB 727 also includes important privacy protections by prohibiting the use of voter information for purposes beyond election administration and voter participation statistics. This clear limitation reinforces public confidence in how sensitive data will be handled.

Importantly, the legislation is permissive, not mandatory. Municipalities retain the discretion to determine whether adopting such a system is appropriate for their community's needs and resources. By enhancing access, preserving strong security standards, protecting voter privacy, and respecting local control, SB 727 provides municipalities with a responsible and modern tool for conducting local elections.

For these reasons, the League respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 727.

For more information relating to this piece of testimony, please contact:

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Maryland's 157 municipalities operate on varied election cycles; some years see a municipal election every month.