



*Live the life you want.*

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To: Senate Energy, Education, and the Environment Committee

The members of the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland urge the Senate Energy, Education, and the Environment Committee to give a favorable report with amendment to SB0073.

The National Federation of the Blind of Maryland favors the following amendment. On page 3, at the end of line 12, add “the voter shall choose whether or not to take advantage of this accommodation.” The ADA has such a provision, so this bill should also include such a provision giving voters the right to choose whether or not to invoke such an accommodation.

Under this bill, the state Board of Elections will promulgate guidelines for the local boards to use concerning special procedures for elderly and disabled voters. It is most important for these voters to be given a choice about which procedures they need or if they need any procedures. Persons who are elderly and persons who have disabilities have a variety of needs, and they are the only ones who can determine those needs. The choice must be specifically mentioned as part of the guidelines because it will not occur if it is not mentioned. These voters should be treated with respect, and their dignity should not be compromised in any way.

SB 73 is a very good bill. It will encourage the elderly and disabled voters to exercise their right to vote because their needs will be recognized and met by the election officials.

For those reasons, we ask for a favorable report with amendment on SB0073. For questions, please contact me at [President@nfbmd.org](mailto:President@nfbmd.org) or at 443-426-4110.