

SB 848_HB 1448_ Municipal Elections - Information

Uploaded by: Trudy Tibbals

Position: FAV

SB 848/HB 1448: Municipal Elections - Information on Candidates and Voting Procedures and Locations: Please vote to **SUPPORT** this bill.

Dear Government, Labor & Elections Committee & Education, Energy & the Environment Committee:

I am writing to express my strong support for SB 848/HB 1448, *Municipal Elections - Information on Candidates and Voting Procedures and Locations*.

Here are several reasons why I believe this bill is essential:

- **Informed Voter Decisions:** Providing comprehensive information about candidates and voting procedures empowers voters to make informed choices, fostering a more engaged and educated electorate.
- **Increased Participation:** By improving access to information, this bill can help increase voter turnout, ensuring that more voices are heard in our democratic process.
- **Transparency and Trust:** Making information readily available promotes transparency in the electoral process, helping to build trust between voters and the electoral system.
- **Support for Local Communities:** Municipal elections play a crucial role in shaping our communities. This bill will help ensure that all residents have the information they need to participate actively in local governance.

I urge you to support **SB 848/HB 1448**, as it is a vital step towards strengthening our democracy and promoting civic engagement.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration on this important issue.

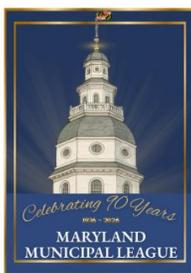
Sincerely,

Trudy Tibbals

SB 848 - FWA - MML.pdf

Uploaded by: Angelica Bailey Thupari

Position: FWA



TESTIMONY

COMMITTEE: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment

DATE: February 25, 2026

POSITION: Favorable with Amendments

BILL: SB 848

The Maryland Municipal League supports the goal of SB 848 to increase transparency and public access to municipal election information. Providing voters with clear, centralized information through the State Board of Elections website can improve participation and consistency across jurisdictions. Municipalities value transparency and are committed to providing timely and accurate election information to their residents. That said, several implementation provisions in the bill would benefit from adjustment to better reflect how municipal election cycles operate, particularly in small towns with limited staff capacity.

First, the bill requires municipalities to submit candidate qualifications for each office at least six months prior to the candidate filing deadline. For many municipalities, particularly smaller jurisdictions with part-time staff, election preparation does not begin that far in advance. A six-month lead time may create administrative challenges without meaningfully improving transparency. Reducing this requirement to three months prior to the filing deadline would better align with local election calendars while still providing ample time for public notice and State publication.

Second, the bill requires municipalities to submit a list of qualified candidates and voting information within one week after the filing deadline. In practice, that one-week turnaround may be too tight, particularly in jurisdictions where candidate verification, ballot certification, and notice preparation occur within the same window. Extending this timeline to ten business days would provide municipalities sufficient time to ensure accuracy while still delivering timely information to the State Board for publication.

Finally, the bill is unclear as to how these requirements apply to special elections. Special elections often occur under compressed timelines and unique circumstances. Clarifying whether and how the submission requirements apply in those situations would help avoid confusion and unintended compliance issues.

With these adjustments to ensure workable timelines and clarity, municipalities can effectively partner with the State to enhance election transparency while maintaining practical and administratively feasible processes. The League respectfully requests favorable consideration with these amendments.

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

Angelica Bailey Thupari: Director, Advocacy and Public Policy, angelicab@mdmunicipal.org

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