



Empowering People to Lead Systemic Change

The Protection and Advocacy System for the State of Maryland

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HOUSE GOVERNMENT, LABOR, ELECTIONS COMMITTEE
Senate Bill 241: Election Law - Individuals Released from State
Correctional Facilities - Automatic Restoration of Voter Registration
April 1, 2026
Position: SUPPORT

Disability Rights Maryland (DRM), a non-profit legal advocacy organization, is the federally-mandated Protection and Advocacy agency for the State of Maryland, charged with defending and advancing the rights of individuals with disabilities. DRM supports SB 241, which requires the State to automatically restore the voter registration of individuals released from incarceration who were registered to vote in Maryland prior to incarceration.

SB 241 creates a requirement for the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) to provide the State Board of Elections (SBE) on a monthly basis with the information of individuals released from incarceration. SBE is responsible for promptly restoring each individual's voter registration at their current address and notifying the individual by mail of their active voter status.

DRM strongly supports this bill and recognizes its significance for formerly incarcerated Marylanders with disabilities, who often face significant barriers during community reentry. Protecting their fundamental right to vote by reducing obstacles in the voting registration process is essential to ensuring full civic participation.

In Maryland, approximately 16,000 people are unable to vote due to currently serving criminal convictions.¹ This disenfranchisement disproportionately affects underrepresented groups, including people with disabilities. Nationally, approximately 38% of incarcerated individuals have at least one disability, highlighting the significant impact of voter disenfranchisement on this population.² SB 241 marks a significant step forward by requiring the restoration of voting rights for individuals upon release, significantly reducing uncertainty for those incarcerated for felony convictions—many of whom have disabilities—regarding the registration and restoration process.

¹ <https://www.sentencingproject.org/fact-sheet/why-we-must-restore-voting-rights-to-over-16000marylanders/>

² <https://bjs.ojp.gov/library/publications/disabilities-reported-prisoners-survey-prison-inmates-2016>

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For these reasons, DRM requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 241.

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