

IN SUPPORT OF HB1066

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of mobile voting. I am here today in my personal capacity, as a Marylander who cares deeply about democracy and civic participation.

Our democracy is strongest when more Marylanders exercise their voice by voting. When turnout is low, we lose some of those voices that are needed to inform decisions that affect our daily lives — including education, housing, health care, and public safety. While Maryland has increased voter turnout through mail-in voting and drop boxes, barriers still remain. Military families, overseas voters and even some student voters face logistical challenges and delays that can make participation difficult.

This bill provides municipalities with an opportunity to try something new by opting into a pilot program that explores mobile voting as an additional tool to increase participation. If the municipal pilots are successful, the lessons learned could help inform future efforts to expand access in other elections.

Early pilot programs suggest mobile voting can improve voter participation. In 2019, a mobile voting pilot program in Denver nearly doubled turnout among military and overseas voters.¹ In Seattle, the King Conservation District (KCD) Board of Supervisors elections began using mobile voting in 2020. In 2022, voter participation doubled (from the 2018 election) and by the 2022, voter participation tripled.² These examples suggest that mobile voting makes a real difference in expanding access to voting.

I was introduced to mobile voting through my volunteer work with a nonprofit, Civics Unplugged, that