

February 4, 2026

Chair Melissa Wells
House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee
145 Lowe House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SB29/HB44 – Election Law - Petitions and Ballot Questions - Contents, Plain Language Requirement, and Procedures

Dear Chair Wells and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Fello, we write in support of ***SB29/HB44 – Election Law - Petitions and Ballot Questions - Contents, Plain Language Requirement, and Procedures.***

Across Maryland, Fello is building communities where people belong. With a team of more than 650 employees, Fello supports over 5,000 people with disabilities each year – creating opportunities that empower people to live the lives they choose. From advancing equity and respect to expanding access and connection, inclusion is at the heart of everything we do. One powerful way this comes to life is through Fello Communities: beautiful, safe, and accessible rental housing that offers choice and stability for residents across income levels, from affordable to market-rate homes.

SB29/HB44 will increase the accessibility and transparency of ballot measures for all voters, including people with disabilities. The bill requires that summaries on petition signature pages and the condensed statements that appear with ballot questions be written in plain, clear language that is easy to understand, avoids legal jargon, passive voice, and double negatives, and explains the practical outcome of each voting choice. The bill also updates deadlines for preparing and certifying ballot language, requires the State Board of Elections and local boards to post information about ballot questions for at least 90 days before a general election, and establishes a public comment period so voters can review and provide feedback on proposed text before certification.

These changes will make ballot language more understandable, reduce confusion, and improve voter comprehension of ballot measures, ensuring that all Maryland voters can make informed decisions at the ballot box.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge a favorable report on SB29/HB44.

Sincerely,


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