



Support: House Bill 708

Municipal Elections – Voter Registration – List and Qualifications

House Bill 708 strengthens election integrity in Maryland’s municipal elections by requiring municipalities to mandate voter registration and by clarifying that only United States citizens may register to vote in municipal elections.

Specifically, the bill requires each municipality to require voter registration for its elections and prohibits an individual from becoming registered to vote in a municipal election if that individual is not a citizen of the United States.

This is not a partisan issue. It is a foundational principle of American self-government: voting in our elections is a right and responsibility of citizenship.

Recent events underscore why clarity in the law matters. The curious case of Ian Roberts—a Guyanese national who reportedly served as a Des Moines, Iowa superintendent while unlawfully present in the United States—has raised serious concerns about voter registration oversight. Despite questions surrounding his immigration status, he remains registered to vote in Maryland to this day. Whether or not any ballot was cast is not the point. The fact that such situations can occur highlights weaknesses in verification systems and erodes public confidence in our elections.

HB 708 provides a straightforward safeguard. By requiring voter registration in municipal elections and clearly limiting eligibility to U.S. citizens, the bill ensures uniform standards across municipalities and eliminates ambiguity that could otherwise invite confusion or abuse.

Municipal elections often involve critical decisions affecting taxes, public safety, zoning, and local governance. Residents deserve assurance that those decisions are made by eligible voters under clear, consistent rules.

Importantly, this bill does not impose new burdens on lawful voters. It simply ensures that municipalities apply a basic and universally understood qualification for participation in American elections: citizenship.

Public trust in elections depends not only on the absence of fraud, but on the perception that commonsense safeguards are in place. HB 708 advances that goal by reinforcing citizenship requirements and promoting transparency in municipal voter rolls.

For these reasons, the State Freedom Caucus Network respectfully urge a favorable report on House Bill 708.