



TESTIMONY FOR HB0499

Election Law - Registered Voter List and Petitions (Ballot Petition Modernization Act)

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Ruth

Committee: Government, Labor, and Elections

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB0499 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Our coalition members are generally very active participants in election work, especially in getting ballot petition signatures. This bill makes the process of getting signatures on ballot petitions easier by allowing for electronic signatures. It also sets up procedures for validating the electronic signatures, and a process for storing them and providing them to the sponsor. We believe that being able to get electronic signatures on ballot petitions is a much more streamlined way of allowing people to get involved in the democratic process. Having more people engaged and empowered to support people and ideas that affect our state is a positive thing.

We strongly support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.