

HOUSE BILL 487

G1

0lr0666

By: **Delegates Crosby, Fennell, W. Fisher, J. Lewis, and Patterson**

Introduced and read first time: January 24, 2020

Assigned to: Ways and Means

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Election Law – Early Voting Centers – Accessibility by Public Transportation**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring that, in a county that has fixed–route public transportation
4 service, each early voting center be located within a certain distance of a public
5 transportation station or stop; providing for a delayed effective date; and generally
6 relating to early voting centers.

7 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
8 Article – Election Law
9 Section 10–301.1
10 Annotated Code of Maryland
11 (2017 Replacement Volume and 2019 Supplement)

12 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
13 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

14 **Article – Election Law**

15 10–301.1.

16 (a) Except as provided under Title 9, Subtitle 3 of this article, during any
17 regularly scheduled primary or general election a voter may vote:

18 (1) in the voter’s assigned precinct on election day; or

19 (2) at an early voting center in the voter’s county of residence on any early
20 voting day in accordance with this section.

21 (b) (1) Each county shall have at least one early voting center established in
22 the county as prescribed in this subsection.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (2) A county with fewer than 125,000 registered voters shall have one early
2 voting center established in the county.

3 (3) A county with more than 125,000 registered voters but fewer than
4 200,000 registered voters shall have three early voting centers established in the county.

5 (4) A county with more than 200,000 registered voters but fewer than
6 300,000 registered voters shall have four early voting centers established in the county.

7 (5) A county with more than 300,000 registered voters but fewer than
8 450,000 registered voters shall have seven early voting centers established in the county.

9 (6) A county with more than 450,000 registered voters shall have eleven
10 early voting centers.

11 (7) In addition to the early voting centers required in this subsection, each
12 county may establish one additional early voting center if the State Board, in collaboration
13 with the local board, and the governing body of the county agree to establish an additional
14 early voting center.

15 (c) No later than 6 months before a primary election, the State Board, in
16 collaboration with the local board in each county, shall designate each early voting center
17 in that county.

18 (d) Each early voting center shall be open for voting as follows:

19 (1) beginning the second Thursday before a primary or general election
20 through the Thursday before the election; and

21 (2) during the following hours:

22 (i) in a presidential general election, during the hours between
23 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. each early voting day; and

24 (ii) in all other elections, during the hours between 10 a.m. and
25 8 p.m. each early voting day.

26 (e) Each early voting center shall:

27 **(1) IN A COUNTY THAT HAS FIXED-ROUTE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**
28 **SERVICE, BE LOCATED NOT MORE THAN ONE-QUARTER MILE FROM A PUBLIC**
29 **TRANSPORTATION STATION OR STOP; AND**

30 **(2)** satisfy the requirements of § 10-101 of this title.

31 (f) Beginning 30 days prior to each early voting period the State Board and each

1 local board shall undertake steps to inform the public about early voting and the location
2 of early voting centers in each county, including:

- 3 (1) a series of public service media announcements;
- 4 (2) mailings to all registered voters in each county; and
- 5 (3) other measures as appropriate.

6 (g) Except as expressly provided in this section, any provision of this article that
7 applies to voting on election day also applies to early voting.

8 (h) The State Board shall adopt regulations and guidelines in accordance with the
9 requirements of this section for the conduct of early voting.

10 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
11 January 1, 2021.