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SB 22 Polling Places Continuing Care Communities
SUPPORT
Senate Educations, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
January 22, 2020

Good Afternoon Chairman Pinsky and Members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee. I am Tammy Bresnahan, Director of Advocacy for AARP MD. As you may know, AARP Maryland is one of the largest membership-based organizations in the Free State, encompassing almost 900,000 members. AARP MD supports SB 22 Polling Places Continuing Care Communities.

AARP is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, nationwide organization that helps people turn their goals and dreams into real possibilities, strengthens communities and fights for the issues that matter most to families such as healthcare, employment and income security, retirement planning, affordable utilities and protection from financial abuse.

SB 22 requires that a separate precinct be established in a continuing care retirement community if the continuing care retirement community requests that a polling place be established on the community premises.

The right to vote is among the most basic of all political rights. Recent elections, however, have revealed many flaws and practices that make it more difficult for citizens to vote. AARP MD believes that policymakers should encourage and promote maximum participation in the electoral process. They should adopt voter registration and voting systems and procedures that expand the range of voting and polling places.

According to the Maryland Department of Aging, as of January 1, 2020 there are 38 operating or approved continuing care retirement communities (CCRC), known as CCRCs, in Maryland. The CCRCs, both operating and under construction, contain over 16,000 continuing care units, of which over 12,000 are independent living, over 2,000 are assisted living, and over 2,000 are nursing care. Some residents in these communities may face challenges in exercising their right to vote. One way to increase the vote in these communities is with mobile voting machines or as this bill requires or to designate the CCRC as a polling place.



For these reasons, AARP MD ask the Committee for a favorable report on SB 22. For questions or concerns, please contact Tammy Bresnahan at tbresnahan@arp.org or by calling 410-302-8451.