

SB 0408/HB0426

Vote By Mail Study

Courtney L. Jenkins on behalf of the American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO Baltimore  
Francis "Stu" Filbey Area Local #181

**Support with Amendments**

Education, Health, & Environmental Affairs  
SB 0408/HB 0426, Vote By Mail Study  
February 20, 2020

**Support with amendments**

Dear Education, Health, & Environmental Affairs Committee Members,

I am writing in support of SB 0408/HB 0426, The Vote By Mail Study, that would require the Department of Legislative Services in conjunction with the State Board of Elections and Maryland Association of Election Officials to study the requirements of implementation of voting by mail in Maryland.

My name is Courtney Jenkins, mail processing clerk employed by the United States Postal Service working at the Linthicum Incoming Mail Facility in Linthicum, Maryland. I am also the Legislative Director for the Baltimore Francis "Stu" Filbey Area Local #181 (BFSFAL181) of the American Postal Workers Union (APWU), AFL-CIO; where I represent approximately 1,700 postal workers serving the greater Baltimore metropolitan area. I support SB0408/HB 0426 because it expands the services the USPS provides and helps us to remain relevant to our customers through participation in their civic duty of voting. While the current presidential administration is looking at ways to privatize our public postal service, voting by mail and studies to implement such would be welcomed by postal workers who are fighting back against efforts to privatize the service. This bill is important because it goes a long way in ensuring the USPS continues to provide vital and necessary services for generations to come. While postal workers are trained and have the expertise of handling political mail, we welcome the opportunity to expand the services we provide by handling election ballots. Often the USPS is rated as the most trusted government agency by the public.

The impact of this bill on communities in Maryland would make voting more secure and accessible to millions of Marylanders who find it difficult to make time to participate in the electoral process. This is especially important for the elderly, young, and those who live at or below the poverty line. Those states with vote by mail have seen an increase in voter turnout and participation during all election cycles from presidential to midterm elections with an average increase in turnout of 10-15%. A study on vote my mail would show how election fairness, security, and safety all increase when voters are able to utilize the mail to vote.

For these reasons I respectfully ask the committee to vote favorably on SB0408/HB0426, Vote By Mail Study, with an amendment to include the study including input and coordination with the organization representing workers who collectively bargain with the United States Postal Service (American Postal Workers Union, National Association of Letter Carriers, National Rural Letter Carriers Association, and National Postal Mail Handlers Union).

Respectfully submitted,  
Courtney L. Jenkins