

HB 1107_Written

Uploaded by: Bradford, Tierra

Position: FAV

March 2, 2020

Testimony on HB 1107
Election Law - Polling Places at Continuing Care Retirement Communities
Ways and Means

Position: Favorable

Common Cause Maryland supports HB 1107 which would require local boards of elections to establish separate precincts in continuing care retirement communities of 200 or more upon request.

Voting should be accessible for all eligible citizens. Allowing some retirement communities to request a polling place will eliminate many of the burdens that discourage voters from voting, creating greater accessibility and equity in our elections.

In the 2016 presidential election, for example, 71 percent of Americans over 65 voted, compared with 46 percent among 18- to 29-year-olds, according to U.S. Census Bureau data.¹ People over 65 continue to show up at the polls far more than any other age group.² Additionally, the number of voters who fall into the category of “older” keeps rising.³ Older people are more likely to view voting as a responsibility and to care about a broad range of issues. Older citizens also tend to be more connected to their communities, which makes them more likely to vote.

Even when offered absentee ballots, many older Americans prefer voting in person.⁴ Eligible voters should be provided every opportunity to exercise their civic duty and have their voice heard in our democracy. Providing polling places to retirement homes would make the voting process more convenient for older voters who wish to vote in person, particularly for those with scheduling and transportation challenges.⁵ Additionally, long waiting lines are a burden for older voters and can be avoided for those living in retirement centers if a polling place is provided.

For those reasons Common Cause Maryland supports HB 1107 and encourages a favorable report.

mangione hb 1107 testimony

Uploaded by: Delegate Mangione, Delegate Mangione

Position: FAV

NINO MANGIONE
Legislative District 42B
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Appropriations Committee



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 3, 2020

HB 1107 Election Law - Polling Places at Continuing Care Retirement Communities

Dear Chairwoman Kaiser and Members of the Committee,

I present House Bill 1107 in hopes of a favorable vote. HB 1107 is a crossfile to Senator West's SB22 and faced opposition because it was applied state wide. We have added an amendment to make this a Baltimore County local bill.

Every campaign speech especially around election time, we politicians love to talk about how much we care about and want to help our seniors. HB 1107 is a bill that does exactly that.

HB 1107 requires Baltimore County board of elections to establish separate precincts at certain continuing care retirement communities to serve that specific retirement community. There are 12 CCRC's in Baltimore County. It would be their choice if they'd like to opt in.

The bill imposes three conditions on the establishment of a polling place at a CCRC:

1. The CCRC must make the polling place available without charge to the local election board.
2. The polling place in the CCRC must meet all applicable requirements for a polling place under the State Election code and the regulations issued by the State Board of Elections.
3. The CCRC must provide assistance to the local election board in recruiting election judges from among the residents of the CCRC to staff the polling place.

Condition 3 is important to note that most residents of CCRCs are elderly but remain active. This is the reason CCRCs are being suggested and not nursing homes or assisted living facilities where residents are more infirm and much less likely to be able to withstand the physically taxing duties of manning a polling place all day during Election Day.

With four CCRCs in my district I have spoken first hand with a number of seniors who continue to be active with civic engagement and who prefer to vote in person. With age unfortunately creating a difficult physical barrier and unpredictable weather around election time, voting can be a serious challenge to those seniors that hope to remain a part of our electoral process.

Currently, Broadmead which is a licensed CCRC in my district, has a polling place located inside the facility.

Most of their residents vote because of this. My hope is we can have more CCRCs making it more convenient for their residents.

Finally, time and again over the years the General Assembly has passed legislation to remove barriers to voting in Maryland. It only makes sense that we do the most we can for our seniors to make it easier and more convenient to exercise their right to vote.

LifeSpan_Danna Kauffman_FAV_HB1107

Uploaded by: Kauffman, Danna

Position: FAV



*Keeping You Connected...Expanding Your Potential...
In Senior Care and Services*

TO: The Honorable Anne R. Kaiser, Chair
Members, House Ways and Means Committee
The Honorable Nino Mangione

FROM: Danna L. Kauffman
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
Richard A. Tabuteau

DATE: March 3, 2020

RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 1107 – *Election Law – Polling Places at Continuing Care Retirement Communities*

On behalf of the LifeSpan Network, the largest and most diverse senior care provider association in Maryland representing nursing facilities, assisted living providers, continuing care retirement communities, medical adult day care centers, senior housing communities and other home and community based services, we **support** House Bill 1107.

This bill requires that a separate precinct be established in a continuing care retirement community (CCRC) if the CCRC requests that a polling place be established on the community premises. It is important to note that this bill is limited in scope to when a CCRC requests to be a polling place. It does not mandate that every CCRC be a polling place. While the State has made great strides in early and absentee voting policies, the ability to physically cast a vote on Election Day is a right that many seniors can no longer exercise due to transportation or mobility issues. House Bill 1107 addresses this issue by requiring the Board of Elections to establish a polling place at a CCRC upon the request and cooperation of the CCRC, ensuring greater access for seniors to be able to vote. We urge a favorable report.

For more information call:

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HB1107_MACo_UNF

Uploaded by: Kinnally, Kevin

Position: UNF



House Bill 1107

Election Law - Polling Places at Continuing Care Retirement Communities

MACo Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Ways & Means Committee

Date: March 3, 2020

From: Kevin Kinnally

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **OPPOSES** HB 1107. This bill would mandate that local boards of elections establish voting precincts in any continuing care retirement community that requests a separate polling place for its residents.

HB 1107 places a substantial administrative and cost burden onto local boards of elections, whose functions are supported by county funding. Without state resources to offset these potentially large costs, the bill represents an unfunded mandate on local governments.

Local boards of elections, working in concert with community organizations, regularly conduct voter outreach campaigns in order to extend voting franchise as widely as possible to eligible voters. These programs, combined with Maryland's effort to offer and promote early voting and the "absentee on demand" option, provide voters with a variety of options to exercise their voting privilege.

As a rule, MACo resists state policies that trigger costly or burdensome local implementation. Providing additional precinct locations entails substantial costs for equipment purchases/leases, equipment storage and transportation, staff compensation and training, and other overhead. These costs are nearly fully borne by the county governments.

Under state law, counties have no choice but to fund these costs – competing for limited local funds against education, public safety, roadway maintenance, and other essential public services.

This bill would place a mandate on county governments to carry out new state policy. Counties would prefer that local boards of elections retain flexibility and discretion in designating polling places to best serve community needs. Accordingly, MACo urges the Committee to issue an **UNFAVORABLE** report on HB 1107 and leave these matters in the hands of local elections officials.