

March 1, 2021

SB0831 ELECTION REFORM ACT OF 2021

COMMITTEE: EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
POSITION: FAVORABLE

I support SB0831, specifically its requirements under 9-102 (D)(1)(VI) that all candidates for a single office appear on the same page or screen of their ballot.

As a candidate for local office in 2015, my name appeared on the second page of an electronic ballot due to a large number of candidates running for office. As in any election, there were likely several reasons for not winning office that year, but no one who runs should lose votes because their names cannot be easily found on the ballot.

While there was a button to advance to the second listing of candidates, some voters (including elderly ones), thought it was inconspicuous or confusing. The remedy is not larger buttons but better ballots. If every candidate for a specific office is listed together, voters can see all of their options, not just some of them.

I urge you to pass SB0831 to strengthen our democracy and enable all candidates - regardless of their last name – to receive equal treatment on all of Maryland's ballots.

Thank you.

SINCERELY,
CLARK A. REED