

JUSTIN READY
Legislative District 5
Carroll County

Finance Committee



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
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Testimony in Support of SB 838 - Election Law – Polling Places – Proof of Identity

March 3, 2021

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

Chairman Pinsky and member of the Education, Health, and Environment Committee,

Senate Bill 838 is common sense legislation that would require voter identification to cast a ballot but expands the types of identification that can be used beyond driver's license or state photo ID to a number of proofs of identity.

Senate Bill 838 expands the definition of voter ID to include a utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or any other government document; a voter notification card; or the specimen ballot mailed to the voter by a local board,

Over thirty states have some form of voter ID requirement to vote in person. With trust in elections at a low ebb, this simple step to verify a voter's identity helps ensure a one-person-one-vote system and cuts down even on human errors. Maryland has had cases in the recent past of people registered in multiple states voting in both, and, anecdotally I have had constituents experience situations where someone in another county checked off their name in a poll book by mistake – causing them to have to fill out a provisional ballot.

Particularly as we move more and more to voting at early vote centers and allow for people to vote at any polling place, having a simple ID check will not just verify that fraud isn't taking place but also help eliminate human error. SB 838 can give voters more confidence that all who vote do so legally.

I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 838.