



Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

EMPOWERMENT • OPPORTUNITY • INCLUSION

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

SB 36: Election Integrity Act

February 18, 2021

Position: Opposition

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council (DD Council) is an independent, public policy organization that works to improve policies, programs and services that support people with developmental disabilities and their families in our communities. The DD Council is led by people with developmental disabilities and their families. From that perspective, **the DD Council opposes SB 36** which requires a voter's agent to only be a family or household member.

WHY are we opposed?

- One of the most cited barriers for people with developmental disabilities in achieving full participation in community life is the availability and reliability of a broad network of support.
- Many people with developmental disabilities do not live with family, and even more rely on direct support professionals, not family members to meet their needs ranging from the every-day to the medically complex.
- Voting is a fundamental right that Maryland's citizens with developmental disabilities want and need to participate in.
- All of Maryland's voters must be able to access their fundamental right to vote simply.
- **There can be many barriers to voting for a person with a disability, this bill creates one more.**

WHAT does this legislation do?

- Requires that a voter's agent be only a household family member.
- The agent may not be a campaign volunteer and may not collect more than three ballots

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