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**Education Health and Environmental Affairs**

**SB271 – Election Law – Voting systems – Accessibility for Voters with Disabilities**

**February 18, 2021**

**Position: support**

Hello members, my name is Ken Capone. I am the Director of People on the Go of Maryland the statewide advocacy group run for and by people with intellectual and or developmental disabilities. We are here to testify in support of the proposed legislation to increase protections for people with disabilities with regards to voting. It is the most fundamental right of our democratic process to have the right to vote in privacy and without outside influence.

We think that having people with disabilities as the only ones to use the electronic ballot marking device is a privacy issue. People on the Go feels the State Board of Elections and local boards of elections should expand the use of the ballot marking devices during early voting and on election day. We feel that people with and without disabilities should be able to use both versions of the ballot marking devices. This ensures the privacy of voters with and without disabilities is retained. If only people with disabilities use the electronic ballot marking devices, it would allow the votes of people with disabilities be known since the ballot style is different than the hand-marked ballot.

We want to ensure that all Marylanders have the same protection when voting.

Thank you

Ken Capone

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