



**TESTIMONY FOR SB0158
ELECTION LAW – TIME OFF FOR EMPLOYEE VOTING**

Bill Sponsor: Senator Lee

Committee: Finance

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0158 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Our members strongly support the right to vote. Many Marylanders like to vote in person

- to ensure that their vote is counted
- to have help when they are voting
- because they have disabilities that make it harder for them to vote by mail
- because they need extra help understanding the process

Regardless of the reason, we must make it possible for everyone to be able to cast their vote in a manner that makes them comfortable. If a voter is more comfortable voting in person, we have to make that allowance so they can participate.

However, many people cannot take time off to vote in person. This bill will require every employer to allow an employee two hours paid time off to vote whenever the polls are open. This is a very small price to pay for participation in our democratic process.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.