



Maryland Association of Election Officials

Representing the Local Election Boards of the State of Maryland

February 11, 2021

Delegate Anne Kaiser, Chair
Maryland House Ways and Means Committee
Room 131, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

RE: HB745 – Information

Delegate Kaiser and Committee Members:

My name is Katherine Berry. I am the Election Director in Carroll County and the co-chair of the Maryland Association of Election Officials (MAEO) Legislative Committee. MAEO represents the local boards of elections throughout the State of Maryland. I am writing today representing myself and MAEO with information regarding HB745 – Election Law – Early Voting Centers – Number Required.

This bill alters the formula for mandating or authorizing more early voting centers. Several jurisdictions would be required to add at least one more early voting centers.

There is a significant fiscal note tied to this bill that affects county government budgets. MAEO also would like to make the committee aware of the growing concerns for administration of additional early voting centers and other changes to how elections are conducted because of pending legislation. There is an increasingly scarce amount of buildings that can meet all requirements for becoming an early voting center. These requirements include spacious parking, ADA requirements, availability for extended periods of time where locks may be changed on doors, radius accessibility as noted in current law and large enough room space to facilitate hundreds of paper ballot styles being available to voters.

Increases to early voting centers will require local boards of elections to purchase additional transportation carts to provide organization for the paper ballot styles mentioned above. Since carts and have to be purchased, warehouse space becomes more limited. Montgomery and Prince George's County will be faced with over 700 ballot styles in the 2022 Gubernatorial Primary Election. Carroll County and Frederick County will have over 100 styles. This plays a significant factor in this bill because more resources will be required and the challenge of locating buildings large enough to meet the criteria of being an early voting center becomes much more difficult.

We continue to strive to make access to the ballot as easy as possible for Maryland voters, but find it imperative that all stakeholders be aware of the challenges we are faced with when it comes to locating facilities willing to host early voting and storage space for necessary equipment.

Thank you for your time. If you have any questions, please contact me at (410)386-2958 or Katherine.berry@maryland.gov.

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