



## Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

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**Ways & Means Committee**  
**HB 153: Election Law - Elections by Mail**  
**January 26, 2021**  
**Position: Support**

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 supports HB 153 which requires that local election boards mail out ballots to voters 21 days ahead of an election.**

### **WHY is this legislation important?**

- 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 securely and independently.
- There can be many barriers to voting for a person with a disability, access to the ballot by mail reduces those barriers significantly.
- Helps ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Help America Vote Act.

### **WHAT does this legislation do?**

- Ensures that voters with disabilities are provided expanded access to the ballot by providing a mail-in ballot to each voter.
- Promotes voter safety and election integrity by providing a number of safeguards.
- Enables more voters with disabilities to engage in the democratic process by providing a less restrictive form of voting.

While much has been done to increase access to voting in Maryland; this bill will help to increase participation in our elections by people with disabilities.

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