



TESTIMONY FOR SB0379
Election Law - Ballots - Processing and Reporting Procedures

Bill Sponsor: Senator Kagan

Committee: Ways and Means

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0379 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of individuals and grassroots groups with members in every district in the state. We have over 30,000 members across the state.

How we all wish we could turn back the clock and had these procedures on the books for the last election. Because Maryland does not allow for early canvassing of absentee ballots, we were all forced to wait weeks to have the final election results known. In Frederick County, the County Executive race was called for Republican Michael Hough, but as the days trickled by, Democrat Jessica Fitzwater overtook him - all due to the delayed counting of absentee ballots.

This ridiculous delay gives talking points to the election deniers who think there is some great conspiracy to overturn Republican wins, which is completely, utterly false. We need to get rid of this delay and get all the votes counted in a reasonable time, while at the same time allowing people who filed absentee ballots cure them of any mistakes.

The changes that this bill would require are common-sense changes that are desperately needed to make the residents of Maryland have faith that the election process is clean, and results are accurate and timely.

The Maryland Legislative Coalition supports this bill and we recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in Committee.