

**3/7/2023**

**To: Maryland General Assembly**

**Ref: HB1112**

**I, Karen Braithwaite-Yarn, wholeheartedly support the Election Law - Ballot Petition Modernization Act, HB 1112**, a bill that has been jointly sponsored and introduced by Del. Sheila Ruth and Del. Sam Rosenberg and will be heard before the House Ways and Means Committee on Tuesday, 3/7/23.

**I also support Amendment 1 and Amendment 2 referenced below.**

**HB1112 proposes that several things be done to update the process surrounding ballot petitions, including the use of electronic or digital signatures.**

1. Repeals the requirement that, to sign a petition, an individual sign the individual's name in a certain form;
2. Requires that information requested from an individual signing a petition that is not required under certain provisions of law be marked as optional on a petition signature page;
3. Alters the circumstances under which signatures on a petition must be validated and counted or invalidated;
4. Authorizes the curing of petition signatures under certain circumstances;
5. Authorizes the use of electronic signatures on a petition.

**AMENDMENT 1 - SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect [October] June 1, 2023.**

The implementation date of **HB1112** will be changed from October 1 to June 1, which is consistent with last year's **Bill HB1089**. This would also make **HB1112** consistent with **HB 0645** (the "Election Law - Electronic Ballot Return System - Study and Request for Proposals"), which requires the same type of technology usage study being conducted by the State Board of Elections and completed by the end of 2023.

**AMENDMENT 2 - 6-208.1. 17 (A)**

IN AN EFFORT TO ASSURE TRANSPARENCY IN THE PETITION PROCESS, A PETITION SPONSOR SHALL BE GIVEN THE RIGHT TO SUBMIT ONE TENTH OF THE MINIMUM NUMBER OF REQUIRED SIGNATURES TO THE LOCAL BOARD OF ELECTIONS FOR REVIEW AND FEEDBACK REGARDING THE SUFFICIENCY OF SIGNATURES COLLECTION IN AN EFFECT TO ASSURE ACCURACY AND COMPLETENESS OF ALL ADDITIONAL SIGNATURES.

**I thank you for your time.**

**With Warm Regards,**

**Karen Braithwaite-Yarn  
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