

HB700 - Massey.pdf

Uploaded by: Genie Massey

Position: FAV

Genie O. Massey

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Senate Education, Energy & the Environment Committee

HB700 - Election Law – Election Judges – Revisions

March 27, 2024

Position: Support

Honorable Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

Our local Boards of Elections must recruit and train many thousands to work as election judges. These workers ensure our elections run smoothly, transparently, and fairly, dedicating long hours to ensure election integrity and a positive experience for voters.

The development of campaign materials to recruit new election judges and the provision to standardize the paperwork involved in the hiring process will support the local Boards of Election in the recruiting process significantly. Providing additional compensation for election judges who have previously served introduces a deserved recognition of experience and loyalty to this crucial civic duty. Such a measure is likely to encourage seasoned judges to continue their service, thereby maintaining a knowledgeable and efficient pool of election officials. Furthermore, authorizing public school students to earn service-learning hours in addition to receiving compensation for serving as election judges is a visionary step. It encourages civic engagement among our youth, educates them on the electoral process, and fosters a sense of responsibility and pride in contributing to their community.

In conclusion, HB700I serves not just the immediate needs of election administration but the broader goal of ensuring our election processes are supported by dedicated, respected, and adequately compensated citizens. I urge the committee to report favorably on HB700, thereby Thank you for considering this vital piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

Genie O. Massey

HB0700OPPOSE.pdf

Uploaded by: Peggy Williams

Position: UNF

HB0700 OPPOSE

Election Law - Election Judges – Revisions

Dear Committee Members:

I strongly oppose this bill. I don't like the language about targeting specific [diverse] demographics. I find it funny that the same people who tout themselves as anti-racist seem to ALWAYS look at skin color and deem black and brown people too ignorant to get IDs and presume they will vote a certain way. We should all be looked at as **AMERICAN CITIZENS**, no matter our color.

Peggy Williams

Severna Park

D31

Crossover of HB700 - 2024.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: John Michael Gudger

Position: INFO



Maryland Association of Election Officials

Representing the Local Election Boards of the State of Maryland

March 27, 2024

Senator Brian Feldman, Chair
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

HB700 - Information

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and Committee Members,

The Maryland Association of Election Officials (MAEO) Legislative Committee appreciates the opportunity to provide informational testimony on HB700. This bill proposes substantial reforms aimed at improving the recruitment and management of election judges, which are pivotal for the successful execution of elections in Maryland.

Youth Engagement

The bill's provision enabling public school students to both earn service-learning hours and receive compensation for serving as election judges is particularly commendable. By offering such incentives, we encourage youth participation in our democratic processes, fostering a deeper sense of civic responsibility and understanding of the electoral process among young Marylanders. We support the notion that service can be compensated, and this dual benefit not only rightly rewards our young citizens for their contributions but also introduces them to the significance of civic engagement.

Standardization of Election Judge Paperwork

House Bill 700 seeks to make uniform the paperwork for election judges, which currently differs from county to county. The legislation requires the State Board of Elections to establish regulations that standardize and minimize the forms or documentation needed for election judges. While MAEO recognizes the benefits of this approach towards simplification and standardization, it's important to highlight that realizing this goal will require a concerted effort among the State Board of Elections, local boards, and county governments. Given the variety in current practices, achieving standardization will demand thoughtful consideration of the distinct needs and operational realities of local jurisdictions.

Needed Definitions

We also appreciate the bill's effort to clearly define "returning election judge." This definition, identifying a returning election judge as someone who has served a term of office for the immediately preceding presidential or gubernatorial election, provides necessary clarity to the provisions related to bonus payments for returning election judges introduced in 2023's HB1200 / CH0157.

Concerns

MAEO greatly appreciates the intent of this bill, but we do have a couple minor points of concern. Specifically, the proposed enactment date of June 1, 2024, could result in inconsistent rules for calculating bonus pay from the primary to the general election. This inconsistency may cause confusion among judges who were expecting bonus pay for the general election, as the new definitions might change their eligibility. Additionally, MAEO seeks clarification within the bill regarding whether the term "preceding election" encompasses primary elections and if participation in both primary and general elections or only one is a requirement for judges to qualify for the bonus.

MAEO thanks the committee for considering our informational testimony and stands ready to assist in any way we can to enhance the recruitment, retention, and efficient management of election judges in our state.

Sincerely,

John Michael Gudger
johnmichael.gudger@maryland.gov
Chair, MAEO Legislative Committee