

Environment and Transportation Committee (ENT)
Witness Guidelines
2023 Session

All bill hearings are in person in Room 250. As a courtesy, witnesses may register to testify by zoom. Hearings stream live on YouTube. You can view all hearings via YouTube live on the Maryland General Assembly (MGA) website home page here: <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/> or on the MGA hearing schedule here: <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Meetings/Day/guidelines>

The MGA website home page also has video tutorials for **My MGA** and testimony sign up.

Oral testimony sign up and written testimony submission (**MUST BE A PDF DOCUMENT**) must be done using **My MGA** on the [Maryland General Assembly website home page](#) (see upper right corner of home page). My MGA works best on Chrome or Microsoft Edge browsers; for Apple devices the Safari browser is best. Other browsers may kick you out of the system.

You **MUST** enter a valid email address that you can access, because this is how you will receive the Zoom link for the hearing.

Bill sponsors default to automatic oral testimony on their bill but must follow these same My MGA procedures and time frames to upload their written testimony (bill sponsors: just select “written” not “both” when uploading your testimony).




*Zoom witnesses: The witness sign up software and Zoom platform will not allow for witness panels (i.e., groups of witnesses) this session.

There is NO switching from in-person to virtual or vice versa once the sign-up period has closed.

*There is a cap of fifty (50) oral testimony witnesses per bill.

Oral testimony sign up and written testimony submission is open for 7 hours, two (2) business days before a scheduled hearing and starts at 8:00 am and closes 3:00 pm (business days do not include weekends).

The following chart details timing:

Hearing is on a 	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Sign up to testify and/or submit written testimony on 	The previous Thursday from 8:00am-3:00pm	The previous Friday from 8:00am-3:00pm	The previous Monday from 8:00am-3:00pm	The previous Tuesday from 8:00am-3:00pm	The previous Wednesday from 8:00am-3:00pm
If a Zoom witness, Zoom link sent: 	Previous Friday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday

Time limits for ENT: Each sponsor will have 4 minutes. **Each witness will have a time limit of 2 minutes.** The Chair will announce any time limit reductions at the start of the hearing.

In-person Witnesses:

The screens in the main lobby outside of the hearing room display the bill order during each bill hearing (bill order status updates throughout each hearing) and show the live hearing with closed captions.

Virtual Witnesses:

If registered for zoom oral testimony, you will receive an email with a zoom link and you will click the link which will place you in the “waiting room” for the Zoom hearing. The host of the Zoom hearing will see your name (must match name used to sign up) in the “waiting room” and will admit you to the hearing once the Chairman calls your name off the Witness List.

Do not use your organization’s name or acronym when joining the Zoom hearing. **The host will not admit you to the Zoom hearing if the name seen by the host does not match the first and last name used to sign up.**

The in-person witnesses will go first for each bill by sign up status and then each zoom witness will testify by sign up status. Zoom witnesses will go back to the waiting room and **may** be readmitted into the hearing again for questions. You may watch the hearing via the YouTube live stream (see link above) while waiting for your bill and your turn to testify. **Bill order posts to the MGA hearing schedule the day before a hearing; however, it is subject to change at the discretion of the Chairman.**

It is **important** to follow along on the YouTube live stream to listen for your bill to come up in the order. If you are testifying on more than one bill, the host will admit you as needed.

After the bill hearing you may request copies of written testimony by calling the Committee with the bill number, your name, phone number and email address. The testimony file will be emailed to you. After the Committee votes on a bill and is on second reader, the testimony will be on the MGA website on each bill’s history page. Testimony for bills not voted are posted to the MGA website on each bill’s history page **after session ends**, or before session ends by calling the Committee to have it emailed to you.

Please call the Committee at 410-841-3990 with any questions.

Note for Zoom witnesses:

If you are signed into your Zoom account, prior to joining the hearing make sure your name will appear correctly: go to your “Profile” in your account and click on “Edit” next to your name and make sure your “Display name” matches the first and last name you used to sign up for the hearing. THEN join the hearing so the host will see the correct name in the waiting room to admit you.