

2021 HGO Committee Witness Guidelines

Hearing Procedures:

- Public bill hearings begin at 1:30 PM.
- Anyone who wishes to testify on any bill must sign up using MyMGA on the MGA website.
- Sign up will start at 8:00 AM and close at 3:00PM **two business days** before the bill hearing.
- Due to the virtual and time adjustments for bill hearings, you are encouraged to submit **written** testimony.
- The Chairman does not expect to hear oral testimony from more than 5 witnesses pro and 5 witnesses con on most bills. On Senate bills with no House cross-file, the Chairman will allow one witness pro and 1 witness con.
- Oral testimony will be limited to 2 minutes per witness except for the sponsor who will have 5 minutes and may cede his/her time.
- The order of the bills will be available the day before the hearing.
- Normally, oral testimony will be heard from 1:30pm to 5:30pm.
- At any moment the Chairman may pause the bill hearing and offer a break to the Committee members and Committee staff. Before recessing, the Chairman will indicate the length of the break.

Testimony:

- All written testimony must be submitted via MyMGA on the MGA website. To sign up to testify either orally or in writing, you must register to use the MyMGA website with a legitimate e-mail address which can be verified.
- For guidance on how to use the MyMGA portal, create your account, and navigate the witness sign-up and testimony submission features, refer to the two video tutorials on the Maryland General Assembly website.
- Video tutorials link: mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Information/VideoTutorials
- **All testimony (written and oral) must be submitted between 8:00 AM and 3:00 PM two (2) business days before the bill's hearing.**
- All written testimony must have a
 - **Visible bill number**
 - **Indicate support, opposed, or support with amendments.**
 - **Name and address of the person testifying**
 - **Organization represented, if appropriate**
- After you have signed up to provide oral testimony for a bill hearing, you will receive an email (sent to the address associated with your MyMGA account) informing you whether you **have** or **have not** been selected to testify at the bill hearing. The HGO Committee YouTube link is: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXljS1YzZl7ReOE9l3jPHOg>
- If you have been selected to testify orally, you will be receive an email containing the zoom link for the hearing. You will be admitted to the hearing when that specific bill is called. You will be unmuted when you are recognized by the Chairman to testify. You may want to concurrently listen to the hearing on YouTube while in the Zoom waiting room so that you can follow along before you are admitted.
- Please stay in the hearing until the Delegates have had an opportunity to ask questions of the witnesses.
- If you are not selected to speak, know that written testimony has the same weight as oral testimony and members do read your written testimony. It is automatically included in the official bill file. We encourage you to follow the hearing on YouTube.

Bill Crossover Note:

- All bills coming from Rules and all bills that are Senate cross-files of previously heard House bills will be SPONSOR ONLY.
- The committee will accept oral testimony on Senate bills from the bill sponsor, a sponsor's designee, or the representative of the Department that requested the legislation.
- For Senate bills that do not have a House cross-file, the Chairman will allow one witness to speak in favor of the bill and one witness opposed, in addition to the bill sponsor.
- For crossover bills and bills referred from the Rules Committee, the public may submit written testimony via the MyMGA portal to indicate their position for the bill. See MyMGA and testimony standards procedures above.