



MARYLAND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COALITION

Dedicated to the rights and quality of life for people with developmental disabilities in Maryland

Voting is a fundamental right. All Marylanders must have the same access to their fundamental right to vote, including people with disabilities.

These bills would make voting easier and more accessible for people with disabilities:

HB044/SB29: Election Law – Petitions and Ballot Questions – Contents, Plain Language Requirement, and Procedures

Requires ballot questions to be written in plain, clear language that is easy to understand. The bill says ballot questions cannot use legal words, double negatives, or confusing language.

Voters will also get a statement explaining what each voting choice means.

HB263/SB100: Election Law – Early Voting Centers – Bus Stops

Requires buses on local routes to stop at early voting centers that are within one-half mile of the bus route.

SB73: Election Law – Polling Place Procedures – Voting by Elderly Voters and Voters with Disabilities (Accessible and Expedited Voting Act of Maryland)

Requires the State Board of Elections to create guidelines so older voters and voters with disabilities can vote faster. The bill requires special faster lines for people with disabilities, clear signs showing where to go, priority seating in waiting areas, and training for election judges on how to help voters with disabilities.

Why do these bills make voting easier for people with disabilities?

- These bills promote greater inclusion for people with disabilities in the voting process.
- Clear ballot language helps everyone understand what they are voting for.
- Better transportation options mean more people get to early voting centers.
- Faster voting lines and trained election judges mean less waiting time and better help at polling places.

These bills would make voting harder for people with disabilities:

**HB0454: Election Law – Voter Registration Eligibility – U.S. Citizenship Verification
(SAVE Our Elections Act of 2026)**

The State Board of Election would have to check US citizenship using a federal system called SAVE for everyone who registers to vote and for people already registered. If SAVE says a person is not a US Citizen, they will be told they cannot vote. They can challenge the decision by submitting documents that prove their citizenship.

HB0462: Elections – In-Person Voting – Proof of Identity

Voters would have to show a photo ID to vote in person. If they don't have one, they must show another ID plus a document with their name and address. If they can't show these, they would have to vote a provisional ballot.

Why do these bills create barriers for people with disabilities?

- People with disabilities are twice as likely to not have a government-issued ID.
- If a voter with a disability lives with family or in a residential setting, they may not have documents like utility bills or bank statements in their own names.
- It may be hard to get a government-issued ID for some people because of problems getting the right documents, getting transportation, or having enough money.
- Adding extra steps to register to vote or to vote in person creates more barriers and confusion.
- The citizenship verification system could wrongly identify eligible voters as non-citizens, forcing them to go through an appeal process.
- Provisional ballots are more complicated and may not be counted if the voter cannot provide the required documents later.

For more information about the bills highlighted here, please contact:
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