

HOUSE BILL 222

G1

1lr1472

HB 568/20 – W&M & JUD

(PRE-FILED)

By: **Delegate Wilkins**

Requested: November 1, 2020

Introduced and read first time: January 13, 2021

Assigned to: Ways and Means and Judiciary

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Value My Vote Act**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services
4 to provide each individual who is released from a correctional facility with a voter
5 registration application and documentation with certain papers, display a certain
6 sign in each parole and probation office, and post a certain notice on the
7 Department's website; requiring the State Board of Elections to adopt certain
8 regulations establishing a program to inform eligible voters incarcerated in
9 correctional facilities of upcoming elections and how to exercise the right to vote;
10 requiring the regulations to require the State Board or local boards of elections to
11 disseminate certain information and instructions, provide certain opportunities for
12 eligible voters to register to vote and to vote, and provide for the timely return of
13 certain applications and ballots; requiring each correctional facility to cooperate fully
14 with the State Board and the local boards in implementing the program; requiring
15 the State Board to submit a certain report on or before a certain date each year to
16 certain committees of the General Assembly; defining certain terms; and generally
17 relating to voter registration and voting by eligible voters who are released from a
18 correctional facility or incarcerated in a correctional facility.

19 BY adding to

20 Article – Correctional Services

21 Section 2-501 to be under the new subtitle “Subtitle 5. Voting Rights of Released
22 Individuals”

23 Annotated Code of Maryland

24 (2017 Replacement Volume and 2020 Supplement)

25 BY adding to

26 Article – Election Law

27 Section 1-303.1

28 Annotated Code of Maryland

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



(2017 Replacement Volume and 2020 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
Article – Election Law
Section 3–102
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2017 Replacement Volume and 2020 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Correctional Services

SUBTITLE 5. VOTING RIGHTS OF RELEASED INDIVIDUALS.

2–501.

THE DEPARTMENT SHALL:

(1) PROVIDE EACH INDIVIDUAL WHO IS RELEASED FROM A
CORRECTIONAL FACILITY WITH A VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATION AND
DOCUMENTATION WITH THE INDIVIDUAL’S DISCHARGE PAPERS THAT INFORMS THE
INDIVIDUAL THAT THE INDIVIDUAL’S VOTING RIGHTS HAVE BEEN RESTORED;

(2) DISPLAY A SIGN IN EACH PAROLE AND PROBATION OFFICE, IN A
CONSPICUOUS LOCATION WHERE NOTICES TO THE PUBLIC ARE CUSTOMARILY
POSTED, INDICATING THAT ANY INDIVIDUAL WHO IS NO LONGER INCARCERATED
HAS THE RIGHT TO VOTE; AND

(3) POST A NOTICE, IN A CONSPICUOUS LOCATION ON THE
DEPARTMENT’S WEBSITE, INDICATING THAT ANY INDIVIDUAL WHO IS NO LONGER
INCARCERATED HAS THE RIGHT TO VOTE.

Article – Election Law

1–303.1.

(A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS
INDICATED.

(2) “CORRECTIONAL FACILITY” MEANS A FACILITY FOR DETAINING
OR CONFINING INDIVIDUALS THAT IS OPERATED BY A CORRECTIONAL UNIT.

(3) “CORRECTIONAL UNIT” HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 2–401(B)
OF THE CORRECTIONAL SERVICES ARTICLE.

1 **(4) “ELIGIBLE VOTER” MEANS AN INDIVIDUAL WHO:**

2 **(I) IS INCARCERATED IN A CORRECTIONAL FACILITY; AND**

3 **(II) HAS THE RIGHT TO VOTE UNDER STATE LAW.**

4 **(B) THE STATE BOARD SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS ESTABLISHING A**
5 **PROGRAM TO INFORM ELIGIBLE VOTERS OF UPCOMING ELECTIONS AND HOW**
6 **ELIGIBLE VOTERS MAY EXERCISE THE RIGHT TO VOTE.**

7 **(C) THE REGULATIONS ADOPTED UNDER SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION**
8 **SHALL REQUIRE THE STATE BOARD OR LOCAL BOARDS TO:**

9 **(1) DISSEMINATE INFORMATION ON ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS TO**
10 **REGISTER TO VOTE AND VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATIONS TO ELIGIBLE VOTERS**
11 **AT LEAST 30 DAYS BEFORE THE DEADLINE TO REGISTER TO VOTE BEFORE EACH**
12 **ELECTION;**

13 **(2) DISSEMINATE INSTRUCTIONS ON ABSENTEE VOTING, ABSENTEE**
14 **BALLOT APPLICATIONS, AND ABSENTEE BALLOTS BEFORE EACH ELECTION IN A**
15 **TIMELY MANNER;**

16 **(3) PROVIDE FREQUENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR ELIGIBLE VOTERS TO**
17 **REGISTER TO VOTE AND TO VOTE; AND**

18 **(4) PROVIDE FOR THE TIMELY RETURN OF VOTER REGISTRATION**
19 **APPLICATIONS, ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICATIONS, AND ABSENTEE BALLOTS**
20 **COMPLETED BY ELIGIBLE VOTERS.**

21 **(D) EACH CORRECTIONAL FACILITY SHALL COOPERATE FULLY WITH THE**
22 **STATE BOARD AND THE LOCAL BOARDS IN IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAM**
23 **REQUIRED UNDER THIS SECTION.**

24 **(E) ON OR BEFORE JANUARY 15 EACH YEAR, THE STATE BOARD SHALL**
25 **SUBMIT A REPORT TO THE SENATE EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL**
26 **AFFAIRS COMMITTEE AND THE HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE, IN**
27 **ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1257 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, THAT**
28 **INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION, DISAGGREGATED BY CORRECTIONAL**
29 **FACILITY:**

30 **(1) THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE VOTERS WHO REGISTERED TO VOTE,**
31 **ATTEMPTED TO VOTE, AND VOTED SUCCESSFULLY BY ABSENTEE BALLOT DURING**

1 THE IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING CALENDAR YEAR;

2 (2) THE NUMBER OF TIMES THE STATE BOARD OR A LOCAL BOARD OF
3 ELECTIONS VISITED EACH CORRECTIONAL FACILITY DURING THE IMMEDIATELY
4 PRECEDING CALENDAR YEAR, THE DURATION OF EACH VISIT, AND A DESCRIPTION
5 OF THE WORK DONE AT EACH CORRECTIONAL FACILITY;

6 (3) A DESCRIPTION OF ANY OBSTACLES TO IMPLEMENTING THIS
7 SECTION OR § 2-501 OF THE CORRECTIONAL SERVICES ARTICLE; AND

8 (4) ANY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING THE IMPLEMENTATION
9 OF THIS SECTION OR § 2-501 OF THE CORRECTIONAL SERVICES ARTICLE.

10 3-102.

11 (a) (1) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, an individual may
12 become registered to vote if the individual:

13 (i) is a citizen of the United States;

14 (ii) is at least 16 years old;

15 (iii) is a resident of the State as of the day the individual seeks to
16 register; and

17 (iv) registers pursuant to this title.

18 (2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1)(ii) of this subsection, an individual
19 under the age of 18 years:

20 (i) may vote in a primary election in which candidates are
21 nominated for a general or special election that will occur when the individual is at least
22 18 years old; and

23 (ii) may not vote in any other election.

24 (b) An individual is not qualified to be a registered voter if the individual:

25 (1) has been convicted of a felony and is currently serving a court-ordered
26 sentence of imprisonment for the conviction;

27 (2) is under guardianship for mental disability and a court of competent
28 jurisdiction has specifically found by clear and convincing evidence that the individual
29 cannot communicate, with or without accommodations, a desire to participate in the voting
30 process; or

1 (3) has been convicted of buying or selling votes.

2 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June
3 1, 2021.