



MARYLAND
Association of
COUNTIES

House Bill 577

Election Law - County and Municipal Employee Service as Election Judge - Administrative Leave

MACo Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Ways & Means Committee

Date: February 19, 2019

From: Kevin Kinnally

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **OPPOSES** HB 577. This bill would require that a county or municipal employee who serves as an election judge receive one hour of administrative leave for each hour of service as an election judge, up to a total of eight hours for each day of service. While well-intentioned, counties are concerned this legislation would infringe on local autonomy and flexibility in local governance.

MACo generally stands for the ability of county governments, guided by their locally elected officials, to serve and react to community needs. County governments – who meet regularly year-round and are deeply immersed in the community – are in the best position to manage these local affairs. Local decision-makers are elected to serve community needs, their actions are subject to broad citizen and stakeholder input, and they are directly accountable to voters.

While several counties already voluntarily comply with the requirements outlined in this bill, MACo has long advocated that such incentives be local-option and flexible – allowing each jurisdiction to best tailor its own priorities. This law would diminish local accountability and preclude local input.

For these reasons, MACo requests an **UNFAVORABLE** report on HB 577.