

## **The Case to Allow Counties the Option to Remove the Ballot Stub from the Maryland Ballot**

### **Positive Voter Experience**

Voters want to see the precinct workers as efficient and effective, this enhances the belief by voter that their ballot will be counted.

1. Ballot table is choke point during the morning or evening rush hour. Not having to remove stubs will greatly reduce this problem.
2. Smoother operation at Early Voting Centers and Election Day.
3. Election Judges will focus on handing off correct ballot style as opposed to clean perforation of ballot from stub.
4. Reduces potential ballot/paper jams at DS 200 from extraneous paper bits and paper dust.
5. Less spoiled ballots because cleaner ballots eliminate risk that ballot will not scan at DS 200 because of bad tear.
6. Eliminates several steps for Election Judges.
7. Maryland in 2012 rated as one of the top three states with longest wait times, in 2016 we were the 7th longest.

### **Positive Improvements for Election Judges**

8. Reduction of paperwork for Election Judges.
9. Permits multiple means to arrange ballots for distribution with better control of how many packs are open.
10. One less procedure for Election Judges.
11. Ballots packages are labeled clearly and color coded.
12. Removes the need for Exacto blades, staple removers etc. and other tools the Election Judges bring to polls.
13. Less waste of ballots because Election Judges will not need to open multiple packs at a time.
14. Focus on matching the information on Voter Authority Card to correct ballot style for voter rather than tearing perforation.
15. Each ballot packet opened will have the label affixed to ballot certificate, no lost or disorganized stubs.

16. Reduces ballot accounting confusion because multiple packs of the same style were open or packs were opened out of order.

### **Administration of Election at Local Board Office**

1. State forms for accounting streamlined.
2. Reduction of Election Judges because no need to have one person separating ballot from stub.
3. No need to retain ballot stubs, maintain only certificates for retention.
4. Fewer complaints because of torn ballots, scanner jams and long lines.

### **No Benefit of Stubs**

1. No loss of quality control because ballots still inspected for flaws before delivery to polling places.
2. No loss of inventory control. Sticker instead of stub.
3. No increased risk of stray ballots in polling place. Less risk because fewer packs open at one time.
4. No increased risk of unauthorized voters getting ballots. VAC for each voter checked by Election Judge at ballot table and at scanner.
5. No increased risk of voters getting multiple ballots. Less risk because Election Judges can focus on it rather than tearing stubs.
6. No benefit of retaining individual ballot stubs.

October 26, 2017

David J. McManus, Chairman  
Maryland State Board of Elections  
151 West Street, Suite 200  
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: COMAR 33.10.01.17(F)

Dear Chairman McManus:

We are writing as Directors of local Boards of Elections to request a change in COMAR 33.10.01.17(F)(1) and 33.10.01.17(F)(2)(b) related to the need for a ballot stub.

The undersigned Directors of local Boards of Elections agree that it is necessary to account for all ballots used at the Early Voting Centers and Polling Places across the State of Maryland. However, using perforated stubs is inefficient, creates a choke point for voters waiting in lines to vote and can negatively impact the DS 200 scanner causing paper jams created by paper bits and dust. The optics of a non-functioning voting unit undermines voter confidence in the process and ultimately the election results.

We urge the State Board to consider permitting the local boards of elections to replace the perforated numbered stubs on each ballot with a numbered sequence affixed to each ballot packet. Similar to managing the security features when tamper tape is removed, when a packet of ballots is opened the ballot numbering sequence would be removed and affixed to a ballot accounting sheet. Spoiled ballots (and there would be a reduction in the ones damaged by election judges) would remain tallied as the current practice. Ballots would still be inspected and accounted for at the same level as they currently are with the stubs. The most significant difference would be improved processing in the precinct by election judges and reduction of functionality issues with the DS 200 scanner.

We were advised at the Biennial Meeting on Monday that this request needed to be made quickly as the door is closing on the ability to change the regulations. We thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Margaret Jurgensen, Election Director  
Montgomery County

Alisha Alexander, Election Director  
Prince George's County

Armstead Jones, Election Director  
Baltimore City

Joseph A. Torre III, Election Director  
Anne Arundel County

Kevin Keene, Election Director  
Harford County

cc: Members, State Board of Elections  
Linda Lamone, State Administrator of Elections

