



HB423 ELECTION LAW - VOTER REGISTRATION - HIGH SCHOOLS

February 12, 2019

WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

OPPOSE

Jeanette Ortiz, Esq., Legislative & Policy Counsel (410.703.5352)

The Board of Education of Anne Arundel County opposes **HB423 Election Law - Voter Registration - High Schools**. This bill establishes procedures for administration of voter registration at public and private high schools to be designated by the State Board of Elections as voter registration entities.

While schools serve as the place of learning and development of civic identity, the infrastructure is not present for them to become sites for voter registration. Such a requirement would also strain already overburdened staff leading to potential issues of accuracy and equity. Additionally, requiring school system employees to conduct voter registration would have a potentially negative effect upon the enrollment of undocumented students. In *Plyler v. Doe*, 457 U.S. 202 (1982), the Supreme Court determined that this group is a protected class under the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment. In accordance with the Supreme Court's holding in *Plyler v. Doe*, AACPS does not collect or inquire about the citizenship status of students. As such, we believe that it is most appropriate for the local or State Board of Elections and other community organizations to continue hosting voter registration drives at high schools in order to best provide for the voter registration of students. It is important to note that students also have the ability to register to vote, or update voting information during a driver's license or photo identification card transaction at the Motor Vehicle Administration. It is important to note that students also have the ability to register to vote, or update voting information during a driver's license or photo identification card transaction at the Motor Vehicle Administration.

The requirements set forth in this bill could also result in an unfunded mandate. AACPS would potentially need to fund an additional position at the high school level to compensate for the additional time and effort needed to fulfill the requirements of the legislation. There would also be costs related to training of all staff who would be involved in voter registration.

Accordingly, the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County respectfully requests an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report on HB423.