Legislative Impact Statement

To: Chairperson Representative Shanley
From: Elisabeth Hubbard, Executive Secretary
Re: 25 House 5709 AN ACT RELATING TO ELECTIONS -- MAIL BALLOTS

Tuesday, March 18, 2025

The Governor's Commission on Disabilities' Legislation Committee has developed a Legislative Impact Statement on the bill listed below. The Commission would be pleased to present testimony to the committee. Please contact me (462-0110) if testimony is desired or for additional information.

The Commission finds this bill beneficial.

This bill would modernize and streamline existing procedures to be on the permanent mail ballot application list by allowing all eligible voters to apply to be on the list. Voters with disabilities can have a harder time voting at the polls because of their disabilities. For example, their health may prevent them from making the trip, or they may not have access to reliable transportation. Some people with disabilities may want to take a longer time to fill out their ballot. Mail ballots allow registered voters to cast their ballots without traveling to the polls. Access to mail ballots would also benefit caregivers of people with disabilities who would not be able to find someone to provide coverage for their caregiving obligations while they vote.

While this bill would benefit voters with disabilities, it would also benefit all voters by providing the option of permanent mail ballots to those who may not be able to make the time to vote at a polling site.

The permanent mail ballot option removes the hassle of submitting a mail ballot application for each election, and the risk of missing the mail ballot application deadline. In turn, this will increase eligible voter participation.