



August 17, 2020

Mr. Michael Cogan
Maryland State Board of Elections
151 West Street, Suite 200
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chair Cogan,

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) recognizes and appreciates the Board's efforts to ensure a safe and secure general election amid this unprecedented public health crisis.

As counties work to protect their residents, local businesses, and economies from the detrimental effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, they are making significant financial investments to address immediate public health and safety needs. At the same time, counties are experiencing massive and unparalleled declines in revenue as a result of the economic downturn.

While state statute mandates that counties pay half of the postage costs for mail-in ballots, Governor Hogan's directive for the Board to send all registered voters mail-in ballot applications — rather than mail-in ballots — will result in unforeseen and substantial costs for local boards of elections, whose operations are supported by county funding.

The Board estimates that it will cost up to \$5.6 million to prepare and mail ballot applications, with the return postage alone costing up to \$3 million. Without state resources to offset these large costs, the order represents a significant unfunded mandate on local governments.

MACo does not seek to revisit the process necessitating extra mailer. Our concerns are merely practical and cost-driven, at the implementation level. As such, MACo requests the Board to formally recommend that the State pay the total cost (printing, mailing, and return postage) for ballot applications.

Counties welcome your partnership during this crisis, and stand ready to collaborate on the responses needed to protect Marylanders across the state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Kinnally', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Kevin Kinnally
Associate Director, MACo

CC: The Honorable Larry Hogan, Governor, State of Maryland
The Honorable Bill Ferguson, President, MD State Senate
The Honorable Guy Guzzone, Chair, Budget and Taxation Committee, MD State Senate
The Honorable Adrienne Jones, Speaker, MD House of Delegates
The Honorable Maggie McIntosh, Chair, Appropriations Committee, MD House of Delegates
The Honorable Anne Kaiser, Chair, Ways and Means Committee, MD House of Delegates
David Brinkley, Secretary, MD Department of Budget and Management
Vice Chair Patrick J. Hogan, State Board of Elections
Malcolm Funn, Member, State Board of Elections
Kelley Howells, Member, State Board of Elections
William Voelp, Member, State Board of Elections
Linda Lamone, State Administrator, State Board of Elections
Nikki Charlson, Deputy Administrator, State Board of Elections
David Garreis, President, Maryland Association of Election Officials (MAEO)