



Testimony in SUPPORT of House Bill – 493
Election Law – Voting Locations – Accessibility by Public
Transportation and Voters With Disabilities
Ways and Means Committee
February 2, 2021

The Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington (JCRC) serves as the public affairs and community relations arm of the Jewish community. We represent over 100 Jewish organizations and synagogues throughout Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. The JCRC is strongly committed to cultivating a society based on freedom, justice, and pluralism. We work tirelessly throughout the entire Greater Washington area to advocate for our agencies that serve the most vulnerable residents, support our Jewish day schools and community centers, and to campaign for important policy interests on behalf of the entire Jewish community.

House Bill 493 requires -- in counties that have fixed route public transportation services -- the local boards of elections to give priority to placing ballot drop boxes at locations that are not more than 500 feet from a public transportation system or stop and designate polling places located not more than 500 feet from a public transportation station/stop. The bill also requires ballot drop boxes to be placed so as to be accessible to voters with disabilities.

The JCRC has a long history of prioritizing the needs and rights of people with disabilities. Our agency is committed to advancing and supporting policy measures to empower individuals with disabilities to achieve maximum independence and to break down barriers to opportunity and inclusion. For these reasons, we urge a favorable vote on HB 493.

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