2019 SESSION PRIORITIES

In 2019, CCMD will follow up a tremendous 2018 year by working to secure and implement previous legislative victories, looking to respond to 2018 election issues, and seeking strategic steps forward on redistricting.

Access to Voting

2018 saw huge wins on this front, with the passage of automatic voter registration and wins in the legislature and the ballot box for election day registration. We're working to ensure these wins are properly implemented while looking to advance discrete reforms to continue improving access and security.

Election Day Registration – We will be working with the 2018 sponsors of the EDR constitutional amendment to fully implement the program in 2019 to ensure that every eligible Marylander can have their voices heard on election day.

Ballot Access Measures – We are in discussions with sponsors on a variety of small/medium-engagement, including postage-paid absentee ballots and stronger programs to give pre-trial detainees access to ballots while in jail awaiting trial. We will also work to ensure that standards are updated to reduce the likelihood of repeats of ballot supply shortfalls in Prince George's County.

Infrastructure Security – While federal agencies report that there were no known intrusion attempts in the 2018 Maryland elections, concerns still exist over infrastructure ownership. We are working with sponsors to introduce legislation to make it easier for the SBE to extricate themselves from contractual relationships with vendors whose ownership changes.

Ranked Choice Voting in Montgomery County and Baltimore City – The movement for RCV continues to gain steam. We will work with the RCV coalition to continue to educate lawmakers on the ways that RCV can better express voter will and increase participation.

Automatic Voter Registration – While no legislative action is necessary, we will be working during the session with agencies to ensure that implementation of one of our landmark 2018 wins is done correctly.

Campaign Finance

2018 also saw huge wins on county-level public funding programs. We will focus on holding these wins up to increase the pressure on the legislature to begin reforming its own campaigns.

Publicly-funded campaigns at the state-level – We are currently working with sponsors to continue building on the county-level gains in publicly funded campaigns. We are working with Del. Mosby to support his legislation on the issue, while also working with legislators to advance a slightly different form of the bill that would apply to the governor, comptroller, and attorney general.

LLC Donations – We will continue to work with Del. Moon to publicize his legislation banning corporate donations to LLCs. We continue to document how our current practices makes enforcement of campaign finance law immensely more difficult.

Greater SBE Resources – The State Board of Elections is hindered in its ability to enforce campaign finance laws due to limited staffing resources. We will work with the SBE and budgetary committees to attempt to secure more funding for oversight within the agency.

Redistricting Reform

Redistricting is primed ahead of the 2019 session. With a federal court allowing a stay of its decision to force the General Assembly to create a new district 6 map ahead of 2020, we now await arguments and a decision from the Supreme Court. Because the case is focused on 2020, however, there's little reason to wait on fixing the process for the future to ensure that voters pick their elected officials and not the other way around.

Gov. Hogan's Redistricting Legislation – We will continue to support Gov. Hogan's reforms as the best practices on this issue moving forward.

Ethics

Regulatory oversight of campaign donors – Numerous incidents over the 2018 cycle highlighted how campaign donations from or to regulators can create the perception of undue influence (or indicate actual undue influence). We will work with legislators to create stronger rules related to donations made to or from regulatory officials by those they regulate.