



February 21, 2013

**Testimony on HB17 –  
*Elective Franchise – Registration and Voting at Polling Places  
Ways and Means***

**Position: Favorable**

Common Cause Maryland supports HB 17, which would allow a qualified voter to both register and vote either during early voting or also on Election Day itself.

No eligible voter should be prevented from voting because of his or her name falling off the voter rolls, complex registration rules, or the inability to register to vote on Election Day. Government has the responsibility to ensure that every eligible voter who makes the effort to register and vote can cast a ballot that counts. By implementing same day registration no citizen loses the right to have their say.

The Attorney General recently ruled that a constitutional amendment is required to allow same day voter registration on Election Day. While their opinion allowed for same day registration during early voting days through a simple legislative remedy, we feel it is important to establish both processes through constitutional amendment. By doing so, this bill provides a legally unchallengeable right to register to vote when you show up to vote.

There are many steps that can be taken to make it easier for voters to engage in our democratic process. HB 17 is a part of the solution, and we urge a favorable report.

*Common Cause Maryland is a nonpartisan, grassroots organization dedicated to restoring the core values of American democracy, reinventing an open, honest and accountable government that works in the public interest, and empowering ordinary people to make their voices heard.*