

HOUSE BILL 41

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2lr0755

(PRE-FILED)

By: **Delegates Smigiel, McDermott, McComas, Hough, Krebs, Schuh, Otto, Kipke, Vitale, and Cluster**

Requested: October 19, 2011

Introduced and read first time: January 11, 2012

Assigned to: Ways and Means

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Election Law – Petitions – Public Verification and Counting of Signatures**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring that the process of verifying and counting signatures on
4 petitions be open to observation by the public, subject to regulations adopted by
5 the State Board of Elections to ensure the integrity, accuracy, and efficiency of
6 the process; and generally relating to public verification and counting of
7 signatures on petitions.

8 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
9 Article – Election Law
10 Section 6–207(a)
11 Annotated Code of Maryland
12 (2010 Replacement Volume and 2011 Supplement)

13 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
14 Article – Election Law
15 Section 6–207(b)
16 Annotated Code of Maryland
17 (2010 Replacement Volume and 2011 Supplement)

18 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
19 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

20 **Article – Election Law**

21 6–207.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (a) (1) Upon the filing of a petition, and unless it has been declared
2 deficient under § 6–206 of this subtitle, the staff of the election authority shall proceed
3 to verify the signatures and count the validated signatures contained in the petition.

4 (2) The purpose of signature verification under paragraph (1) of this
5 subsection is to ensure that the name of the individual who signed the petition is listed
6 as a registered voter.

7 (b) (1) The State Board, by regulation, shall establish the process to be
8 followed by all election authorities for verifying and counting signatures on petitions.

9 **(2) SUBJECT TO REGULATIONS ADOPTED BY THE STATE BOARD**
10 **TO ENSURE THE INTEGRITY, ACCURACY, AND EFFICIENCY OF THE PROCESS OF**
11 **VERIFYING AND COUNTING SIGNATURES ON PETITIONS, THE PROCESS SHALL BE**
12 **OPEN TO OBSERVATION BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PETITION SPONSOR,**
13 **OPPONENTS OF THE PETITION, AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.**

14 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
15 June 1, 2012.