

SENATE BILL 1129

G1, F3

4lr3230
CF HB 1353

By: **Howard County Senators**

Introduced and read first time: February 9, 2024

Assigned to: Rules

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Howard County – Board of Education Elections – Ranked–Choice Voting**

3 **Ho. Co. 6–24**

4 FOR the purpose of authorizing the Howard County Council to adopt, by law, a
5 ranked–choice voting method for elections for the Howard County Board of
6 Education; and generally relating to the use of ranked–choice voting for elections for
7 the Howard County Board of Education.

8 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
9 Article – Election Law
10 Section 8–101 and 9–204
11 Annotated Code of Maryland
12 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

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

15 **Article – Election Law**

16 8–101.

17 (a) Under the supervision of the State Board, and in accordance with regulations
18 and procedures adopted by the State Board, a local board shall conduct all elections held
19 under this article in the county in which the board is located.

20 (b) Except where it would be inappropriate, or as otherwise provided in this
21 article, the electoral process for primary elections, general elections, and special elections
22 shall be uniform.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



(C) (1) IN THIS SUBSECTION, “RANKED–CHOICE VOTING” MEANS A METHOD OF CASTING AND TABULATING VOTES IN WHICH VOTERS RANK CANDIDATES IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE AND VOTES ARE TABULATED IN A MANNER THAT REFLECTS VOTER PREFERENCE.

(2) THE HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL MAY, BY LAW, ADOPT A RANKED–CHOICE VOTING SYSTEM FOR ELECTIONS FOR THE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION.

(3) A LOCAL LAW ENACTED UNDER THIS SUBSECTION MAY PROVIDE FOR:

(I) THE BALLOT FORMAT;

(II) PROCEDURES FOR TABULATING VOTES; AND

(III) ANY OTHER PROVISION NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT RANKED–CHOICE VOTING.

(4) A LOCAL LAW ENACTED UNDER THIS SUBSECTION SHALL PROVIDE FOR AN EDUCATIONAL CAMPAIGN EXPLAINING HOW TO VOTE USING RANKED–CHOICE VOTING.

9–204.

(a) Subject to the other provisions of this subtitle and to different presentations required or made desirable by different voting systems, all ballots used in an election shall be as uniform as possible.

(b) Except as otherwise specifically provided in this title, or unless a provision is clearly inappropriate to absentee ballots, the provisions of this subtitle relating to ballot content and arrangement shall apply to the arrangement of absentee ballots.

(c) If applicable for the voting system in use, the appropriate components of the voting system shall be configured for a primary election to permit the voter to vote only for the candidates for which the voter is entitled to vote.

(D) THE HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL MAY, BY A LAW ADOPTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 8–101(C) OF THIS ARTICLE, PROVIDE FOR THE FORMAT OF BALLOTS TO BE USED IN AN ELECTION CONDUCTED BY RANKED–CHOICE VOTING.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June 1, 2024.