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July 27, 2020

The Honorable Larry Hogan

Governor of Maryland

100 State Circle

Annapolis, MD 21401-1925

Re: Free and Fair Elections

Dear Governor,

As you are aware, the results of June’s primary is disturbingly shrouded in doubt. Issues with the election – including, but not limited to, late and missing ballots – are well documented. This dire situation requires rectification before the general election in November. You have the responsibility that comes with being the governor to right significant wrongs. You must do your part to ensure that free and fair elections, in which all voters have their voice heard, take place in this wonderful state.

Many citizens have reported that they received primary ballots addressed to other individuals. Some people have reported that they received a ballot intended for them printed in a language (i.e., Spanish) other than English. Furthermore, a significant number of ballots were returned to the post office as being ‘undeliverable’ or not counted due to formalities involving signatures.

The cumulative effect of these problems is voter suppression and a growing distrust between Marylanders and the government. In a democratic country such as ours, the belief in our voting procedures is essential and invalid results cannot go unchecked.

This letter, so far, has argued nothing new. You, along with Lt. Gov. Rutherford, have both gone on record and acknowledged the significance of the problems associated with this year’s primary election. It has been recommended by several elected leaders in the state that Maryland Elections Administrator Linda Lamone resign from her post amidst this controversy.

You have emphatically pointed out that the State Board of Elections has suffered from “a serious lack of leadership,” further commenting that “[the] most basic responsibility of the SBE is ensuring that free and fair elections are conducted accurately and there were obviously significant failures.”

In your most recent press conference (held on July 22nd), you succinctly stated that the primary election was riddled with “rampant” problems and that it was “an unmitigated disaster.” It was also during this conference that you highlighted how November’s general election was going to be different. Keeping with your theme of Maryland’s Road to Recovery, you outlined how the election in November was going to be much more valid than the primary. You mentioned that in November citizens would be able to vote in-person, vote using absentee ballots, and vote using mail-in ballots. This is one way that you have taken the lead in rectifying the issues with fraudulent elections.

It was during this conference that you also stated the legalities afforded to Maryland voters. You clearly stated that in-person voting was a state law and that not allowing in-person voting was a breach of that legal right. I contend, however, that you must do more. Casting blame and modifying upcoming elections is only part of the solution.

As people were permitted to practice social distancing (standing six feet away from others and wearing masks) as they stood in lines in June to shop at retail stores, the same option should have been afforded to people when it came to voting in-person. It was not. Instead, you ultimately made the decision, under the cloak of safety, to virtually eliminate in-person voting, breaching the very legal right you alluded to in the most recent press conference.

It is for these reasons that I implore you to make an executive order and provide Marylanders with a second primary election in which the same options you are providing for the general election be utilized. If you do not find this to be a reasonable request due to logistical issues, I strongly urge you to consider an alternative option such as having all candidates from the primary ballot placed on the general election ballot.

2020 has been a tumultuous year. As Americans, we are facing once-in-a-generation challenges. We are taking these hardships head-on at a time when political divisiveness is abundant. At a time in which Americans want their voice to be heard almost more than at any other time in our nation’s history, faulty elections should not, and cannot, be a mitigating factor. As the chair of The National Governor’s Association your attention to this matter, your voice, and your subsequent action or inaction, is pertinent. You must right the wrongs even if you were not involved in them, ensuring that those who enter an office are truly representative of the voice of the Maryland public. After all, solving problems for the betterment of those being represented is one characteristic of a strong leader.

Kindest regards,

Tim Fazenbaker

2nd Congressional Candidate

Founder of freeandfairelection.org