

~~supervisors of elections to begin the process of canvassing absentee ballots.~~

FOR the purpose of altering the requirements for the timing of the canvass of absentee ballots; and requiring that each local board of supervisors of elections post notice in a certain manner regarding the date and time of the canvass.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article 33 – Election Code

Section 27-9(a) and (b)

Annotated Code of Maryland

(1993 Replacement Volume and 1995 Supplement)

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

Article 33 – Election Code

27-9.

(a) The board shall not open [or unfold] any absentee ballot at any time prior to [the closing of the polls] 10 A.M. ON THE ~~THURSDAY~~ WEDNESDAY FOLLOWING ELECTION DAY.

(b) (1) Subject to the provisions of paragraph (2), at any time after [4 p.m. on the Wednesday following election day] ~~10 A.M. ON THE THURSDAY~~ 12 NOON ON THE WEDNESDAY FOLLOWING ELECTION DAY and not later than the canvass of the votes cast at the regular voting places in this State at any election, the several boards shall meet at the usual place for holding the circuit court for the county or at the usual offices of the board and shall proceed to count, certify and canvass the absentee ballots contained in the ballot envelopes. Each board of canvassers shall keep the ballots safe from tampering until the canvass is completed. The State Administrative Board of Election Laws and the several boards shall take all appropriate and feasible steps to protect the privacy of all absentee ballots.

(2) (I) EACH BOARD SHALL GIVE PUBLIC NOTICE OF THE SPECIFIC DATE AND TIME ON WHICH THE CANVASS SHALL BEGIN. THE NOTICE SHALL BE POSTED AT THE OFFICE OF THE BOARD AT LEAST 10 WORKING DAYS BEFORE THE DAY OF THE CANVASS.

(II) The canvass may not be completed until all absentee ballots that have been received timely have been counted.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 1996.

Approved May 23, 1996.