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PRESS RELEASE

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Attorney General Frosh Leads Coalition of Attorneys General in Urging Passage of H.R. 1, the “For the People Act of 2021”
The Act is a Comprehensive Package of Reforms to Address Voter Suppression, Foreign Interference in Elections and Raise Ethical Standards of Federal Officials

BALTIMORE, MD – Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh today led a coalition of 21 attorneys general in sending a [letter](#) to Congressional leadership urging support for H.R. 1 (Rep. Sarbanes)/S. 1 (Sen. Merkley), the For the People Act of 2021. The bill is an omnibus package of democracy reforms designed to expand access to the ballot, protect elections from foreign interference, force disclosure of dark money in federal elections, and raise ethical standards for federal officials.

According to a Brennan Center report, in 2021 legislative sessions to date, at least 165 bills in 33 states have been introduced to restrict voting access – four times the number of similar bills introduced last year. Despite confirmation that there was no evidence of widespread fraud or irregularity in the 2020 election, state legislators have seized upon baseless voter-fraud allegations to curtail mail-in voting options, impose stringent voter ID requirements, limit voter registration opportunities, and allow even more aggressive purging of voter rolls.

“We have witnessed the dangerous result of lies and misinformation spread about our voting process and systems,” said Attorney General Frosh. “H.R. 1 will help curtail attempts to suppress the vote of millions of people, protect our election process from foreign interference, and ensure our elected officials are unable to profit from their office.”

The Act includes several measures that would neutralize efforts to suppress the vote by making it easier to vote, reducing the influence of dark money in elections, and codifying ethical standards for public servants. The Act would improve and modernize access to the ballot by:

- requiring states to implement online registration;
- establishing automatic voter registration;
- prohibiting unnecessary purges of the voting rolls;

- requiring states to permit voters in federal elections to submit a sworn statement to meet ID requirements;
- expanding access to federal elections through early voting and mail-in voting;
- prohibiting the knowing dissemination of false information about elections and stiffening penalties for voter intimidation.

Additionally, the Act would close dark-money loopholes by requiring disclosure when wealthy donors give \$10,000 or more to a group that spends money on elections and addresses the problem of partisan gerrymandering by putting redistricting in the hands of independent commissions.

Finally, the Act seeks to close legal loopholes that allow the President and certain federal officials to evade accountability for personally profiting from their office by:

- heightening disclosure requirements applicable to the president;
- requiring the holder of the Office of the President to divest from financial interests that pose a conflict of interest;
- providing the Office of Government Ethics with enhanced enforcement powers; and,
- prohibiting members of Congress from serving on the board of directors of for-profit entities during their terms in office and requiring the Judicial Conference to develop a code of ethics applicable to Supreme Court Justices.

In addition to Maryland, the letter was signed by the attorneys general of Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, and Washington.

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