STATE OF MARYLAND

Proclamation

Renewal of Declaration of State of Emergency and
Existence of Catastrophic Health Emergency — COVID-19

WHEREAS, on March 5, 2020, a state of emergency and catastrophic health emergency was, pursuant to the Maryland Constitution and Laws of Maryland, including but not limited to Title 14 of the Public Safety Article, and in an effort to control and prevent the spread of COVID-19, proclaimed within the entire State of Maryland;

WHEREAS, the emergency conditions, state of emergency, and catastrophic health emergency continue to exist;

WHEREAS, the state of emergency and catastrophic health emergency interferes with the electoral process; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary and desirable for a comprehensive plan to be prepared regarding the electoral process in connection with the 2020 Primary Election, and considering steps to be taken to prevent or reduce the harmful consequences to the electoral process, during and following the state of emergency and catastrophic health emergency;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, LAWRENCE J. HOGAN, JR., GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND, BY VIRTUE OF THE AUTHORITY VESTED IN ME BY THE MARYLAND CONSTITUTION AND THE LAWS OF MARYLAND, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO TITLE 14 OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY ARTICLE AND TITLE 8 OF THE ELECTION LAW ARTICLE, AND IN AN EFFORT TO CONTROL AND PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 WITHIN THE STATE, HEREBY DECLARE THAT A STATE OF EMERGENCY AND CATASTROPHIC HEALTH EMERGENCY CONTINUES TO EXIST WITHIN THE ENTIRE STATE OF MARYLAND, RENEW THE MARCH 5, 2020, PROCLAMATION, AND FURTHER PROVIDE AND ORDER, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY:

I. Primary Election.

A. The Primary Election of April 28, 2020, is hereby postponed to June 2, 2020, in all of the State.

B. Comprehensive Plan for Primary Election.

i. No later than April 3, 2020, the State Board of Elections shall, in consultation with the Maryland Department of Health, prepare and submit to the Governor a Comprehensive Plan for the conduct of the Primary Election.

ii. The Comprehensive Plan shall minimize injury and damage from the COVID-19 public health catastrophe, and save lives, while, to the fullest extent possible given the interference in the electoral process from the state of emergency and catastrophic health emergency, inspire public confidence and trust in the conduct of the Primary Election by reasonably assuring under the circumstances that:

1. all persons served by the election system are treated fairly and equitably;

2. all qualified persons may register to vote and that those who are not qualified do not vote;

3. those who administer elections are well-trained, that they serve both those who vote and those who seek votes, and that they put the public interest ahead of partisan interests;

4. full information on elections is provided to the public, including disclosure of campaign receipts and expenditures;

5. citizen convenience is emphasized as is feasible and does not endanger the public health, welfare, or safety;

6. security and integrity are maintained in the casting of ballots, canvass of votes, and reporting of election results;

7. the prevention of fraud and corruption is diligently pursued; and

8. any offenses that occur are prosecuted.

II. In the Special General Election to fill the vacancy in the office of the Representative of Congress for the Seventh Congressional District of Maryland of April 28, 2020, the State Board of Elections shall utilize, as an alternate voting system, voting by mail.

III. All other statutory and regulatory dates and time periods relating to the Primary Election or Special General Election may be additionally postponed in the discretion of the State Board of Elections to conform to this Order.

IV. The State Board of Elections shall have the authority to designate any of its employees or the State employees of any local board of elections as "emergency" and "essential" State employees or personnel for the purpose of performing duties necessary to conduct the Primary Election or Special General Election.

V. The effect of any statute, rule, or regulation of an agency of the State or a political subdivision inconsistent with this order is hereby suspended.

Given Under My Hand and the Great Seal of the State of Maryland in the City of Annapolis, this 17th day of March, 2020.

Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr.
Governor

ATTEST:

John C. Wobensmith
Secretary of State