

# U.S. SENATOR BEN CARDIN



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Dear Fellow Marylander,

The rule of law and our American Constitution have prevailed yet again. Under the cloud of a global pandemic, American voters cast their ballots by mail and in person in [record numbers](#). Votes have been painstakingly counted – and continue to be counted – following the rules set forth by each individual state.

Our republic has survived one of its greatest challenges ever by allowing the process to work as designed. Counting every vote is how our country has conducted its elections year after year after year.

This election, we navigated around a sea of disinformation and [COVID safety measures](#). Most typical campaign events, including quadrennial political conventions, moved to the virtual world with Zoom rallies becoming regular occurrences. Many states made some changes to their election procedures to make it safer and easier for voters to cast their ballots without putting their health and safety at risk. Absentee or mail-in balloting expanded, allowing those who did vote in person to have more physical distancing between voters and poll workers.

Marylanders voted by mail-in ballots in [record numbers](#), and as long as their ballot was postmarked by Election Day, the Board of Elections (BOE) will count them if received by November 13. The BOE reports that 87% of requested mail-in ballots have already been returned to the local boards of elections, which is a significant increase from 77% in 2018 and 78% in 2016.

Marylanders also took advantage of our new [same-day registration law](#), with more than 26,000 Marylanders registering to vote either on Election Day or during our one week-long early voting period, which included weekends. You can view the unofficial results by office at: [https://elections.maryland.gov/county\\_status\\_page\\_root.html](https://elections.maryland.gov/county_status_page_root.html)

You can view the total number of mail-in ballots, as well as uncounted ballots, at: [https://elections.maryland.gov/press\\_room/2020\\_stats/PG20\\_Ballots\\_Left\\_to\\_Count.pdf](https://elections.maryland.gov/press_room/2020_stats/PG20_Ballots_Left_to_Count.pdf)

Unfortunately, in some states, like Maryland, the pandemic also made it [harder to recruit volunteers as poll workers](#). The older Americans who often filled this role are among those most vulnerable to COVID, rightly causing thousands nationwide to sit this election out. This shortage led to a shrinking of polling locations. We owe a debt of gratitude to our college and university students who stepped in as well to fill this crucial role on Election Day. In states where they were available, many took advantage of official drop boxes for submitting their absentee ballots before and up to Election Day.

During early voting periods and on Election Day, [excessive lines continued to be a problem](#) in the most populated districts across the country. Tempers flared at times but patience was in greater abundance. The voting process went on and votes were cast according to the law. Systems adapted and we learned many lessons for the next election. We can do better and we must enact progressive voting rights laws in the next Congress to ensure all eligible voters can vote safely and conveniently in a timely manner.

What did not change in this election was that every vote counts.

I particularly want to thank the many federal, state, and local officials who worked tirelessly to combat voter intimidation and misinformation, and helped to ensure we held a free and fair election. This includes members of our law enforcement, homeland security, and intelligence communities who fought to combat malign foreign influence from those seeking to undermine our democracy. Outside of the government, I want to thank the legions of volunteer lawyers who worked to protect everyone's right to vote, and who today are still making sure that every vote is counted.

By trusting our democratic institutions, Americans have voted to embrace the future together, working to form a more perfect union and extending a hand in fellowship to our neighbors near and far.

Whoever you supported for president, your vote mattered. Thank you for being a part of this most fundamental exercise in sustaining the future of our great country.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ben". The letter "B" is large and stylized, with the "en" following in a cursive script.

Ben Cardin

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