

Letter from Larry Helminiak, SCBA Board member and Government Affairs Chairperson

August 2018

How many times have you heard someone say, "I didn't vote because my one vote won't make a difference." Fact is, in the primary election for county executive, in Baltimore County, the winning candidate got only about 10 votes more than the losing candidate. Nationwide, there are 231 million people eligible to vote; but only 139 million actually voted.

If you remember the presidential election in 2016, it was 3 o'clock in the morning before states like Florida and Ohio were finally decided.

You've heard the word "Gerrymandering". What that means is that some districts are so outrageously drawn that the voting district looks like a salamander. The roots of this word is from Massachusetts where, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Governor Gerry drew district lines so odd that someone in the Boston Globe said that it looked like a salamander, so he combined the names and called it Gerrymandering.

This year in Maryland we will vote for Governor. What's so important this year is that the person who wins the Governorship gets to supervise the drawing of the re-districting lines in 2020. If you've ever seen an electoral map of the State of Maryland you'll know how important this is.

On the national scene, both the House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate are so closely divided that just a few votes (relatively) could decide which party controls the House and the Senate.

Please take the time to vote. We learned in Baltimore County that you and the voting members of your own family may just decide who makes our laws for the next four years.