



BRANDON M. SCOTT
MAYOR

*100 Holliday Street, Room 250
Baltimore, Maryland 21202*

February 23, 2023

The Honorable William Ferguson
President of the Senate
State of Maryland
100 State Circle
Annapolis Maryland, 21401

The Honorable Adrienne Jones
Speaker of the House
State of Maryland
100 State Circle
Annapolis Maryland, 21401

Dear President Ferguson & Speaker Jones,

I am writing to express my concern about the scheduled date for the primary election in April 2024. As Mayor of Baltimore, it is important to me that all members of our community have equal access to participate in our democratic process. Unfortunately, I have recently been made aware of a significant issue that may prevent observant members of the Jewish community from being able to exercise their right to vote.

One of our community members informed me that the primary election date, April 23, 2024, coincides with the First Day of the Passover holiday. As you may know, this is a holy period during which no work can be done, similar to the High Holidays in the fall and each Shabbat. Under Jewish law, voting during this period would be prohibited.

Complicating matters is the presence of a significant Orthodox Jewish community in Northwest Baltimore, where the city primary is scheduled to take place. As Mayor, I believe it is our responsibility to ensure that all members of our community are able to participate in our democratic process without obstacles or barriers.

I understand that changing the election date would require an act of the General Assembly, except in the event of a pandemic emergency or late court changes to redistricting maps. However, I strongly encourage the General Assembly to identify a new date that would avoid this conflict with the Passover holiday.

As we are currently in session, I believe that an issue as significant as this can quickly receive the attention and support of our legislators. I am committed to working with you to find a solution that accommodates all communities and ensures that every eligible voter has the opportunity to participate in our democratic process.

Sincerely,

Mayor Baltimore City