



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **National Federation of the Blind Applauds Ruling on Access to Absentee Ballots**

**Baltimore, Maryland (September 4, 2014):** [The National Federation of the Blind](#), the nation's leading advocate for equal access to voting for the blind, today applauded a ruling by Judge Richard D. Bennett of the United States District Court for the District of Maryland requiring the Maryland Board of Elections to make its online ballot-marking tool available to voters with disabilities in the November election. The ruling in *National Federation of the Blind et al. vs. Linda H. Lamone et al.* means that voters with disabilities will be able to mark absentee ballots online for printout and mailing to the Board of Elections.

Mark Riccobono, President of the National Federation of the Blind, said: "The court today has protected the fundamental rights of voters with disabilities, including the rights to equal access and to a secret ballot, by ruling that we must be able to mark an absentee ballot privately and independently, rather than being forced to request assistance in doing so. This ruling is a victory for Maryland voters with disabilities and puts election officials across the nation on notice that full and equal access to voting includes access to absentee ballots, as well as to the voting equipment used at polling places."

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## **About the National Federation of the Blind**

The National Federation of the Blind knows that blindness is not the characteristic that defines you or your future. Every day we raise the expectations of blind people, because low expectations create obstacles between blind people and our dreams. You can live the life you want; blindness is not what holds you back.

**National Federation of the Blind**

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