

**Department of Legislative Services**  
 Maryland General Assembly  
 2014 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

House Bill 569 (Delegate Howard, *et al.*)  
 Ways and Means

**Campaign Finance - Cash Contributions - Limit**

This bill alters an existing \$100 limit on cash contributions to campaign finance entities in a four-year election cycle so that it applies as an aggregate limit on cash contributions to all campaign finance entities in a calendar year.

The bill takes effect January 1, 2015.

**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** General fund expenditures increase by \$2,500 in FY 2015 for software programming. Revenues are not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	2,500	0	0	0	0
Net Effect	(\$2,500)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

*Note:() = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate effect*

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

**Analysis**

**Current Law:** Unless otherwise expressly authorized by law, all campaign finance activity for an election governed by State law must be conducted through a campaign finance entity. In general, a person is limited to contributing \$4,000 to any one campaign finance entity and \$10,000 to all campaign finance entities within a four-year election

cycle. Beginning January 1, 2015, pursuant to Chapter 419 of 2013, those limits will increase, so that a person will be able to contribute up to \$6,000 to any one campaign finance entity and up to \$24,000 to all campaign finance entities within a four-year election cycle.

A contribution may be made only by (1) check; (2) credit card; (3) cash, if the contribution does not exceed \$100 in an election cycle; or (4) an electronic method that the State Board of Elections (SBE) authorizes by regulation.

**Background:** With respect to cash contributions, SBE's *Summary Guide to Candidacy and Campaign Finance Laws* indicates:

“A person can make cash contributions in the aggregate up to \$100 in an election cycle to a [campaign finance entity].”

**State Fiscal Effect:** General fund expenditures increase by \$2,500 in fiscal 2015 for SBE to modify the online Maryland Campaign Reporting Information System.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** State Board of Elections, State Prosecutor's Office, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 11, 2014  
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Analysis by: Scott D. Kennedy

Direct Inquiries to:  
(410) 946-5510  
(301) 970-5510