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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**SB374: Maryland Public Ethics Law - Special Session of the General Assembly -  
Contributions Prohibited  
House Ways and Means Committee  
March 30, 2021 | 1:30pm**

Last March, the Maryland General Assembly (MGA) adjourned early for fear of an outbreak of COVID-19 among legislators and their staff. During the interim, a handful of legislators [called for a Special Session](#) to address issues related to racial injustice and the economic effects of the pandemic. While we did not meet again in 2020, it is important that we plan for the future.

Sixty-one times, the General Assembly has convened in Special Session. Current law prohibits legislators from accepting donations during the Legislative Session. As amended in the Senate, [SB374](#) codifies current practice crafted and enforced by the Ethics Committee. A fundraising event that was scheduled prior to the announcement of a Special Session may take place if:

- The legislator had committed funds to the event; and/or
- Invitations had already been sent.

This would ensure that our government is functioning transparently and without influence or perception of influence from special interests. Alaska, Connecticut, New Mexico, Oregon, Virginia, and Washington already have similar laws. Maryland should take this simple but important step to provide government accountability and transparency.

**This legislation passed unanimously both in Committee and on the Senate Floor.  
I urge a favorable report of SB374.**