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**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 585
PROTECTING ELECTION OFFICIALS ACT OF 2024**

February 6, 2024

By Charlie Cooper, President

Get Money Out–Maryland is an all-volunteer force seeking to get big money out of our political system and make elections fairer. We believe that every citizen should have equal access to the ballot as a voter or as a candidate. District lines should be fair to every voter, regardless of race, ethnicity, or party affiliation. The corruption of big money in politics must be eliminated, and the disproportionate influence of concentrated wealth reduced.

We strongly support House Bill 585 to counter the disturbing trend of threats against election officials and even against citizen election judges. We are enormously proud of the election workforce across the nation. Regardless of party affiliation, they almost unanimously withstood intense pressure to mischaracterize election results. Fair election laws and rules held because of their courage.

Nevertheless, misinformation continues to swirl. News reports have documented a drastically higher level of threats against election officials, workers, and citizen election judges. We are concerned that another increase in this kind of activity could cause even more vacancies in these vital positions. Passing this legislation is a sensible step to give the election workforce a sense of security.

Get Money Out – Maryland is pleased to see that this bill has bipartisan support. We urge a favorable report on House Bill 585.