



TESTIMONY FOR HB0906

Campaign Finance – Political Organizations – Disclosures on Solicitations (Stop Scam PACs Act)

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Palakovich-Carr

Committee: Ways and Means

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB0906 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Running a campaign is hard. Running a campaign and having fraudulent groups use a candidate's image to collect money for themselves can be damaging to the candidate, and also pulls money away from the campaign.

This bill, if enacted, requires that anytime an organization fundraises using the pretext that they are supporting a particular candidate using the candidate's name, image or likeness in the solicitation, they must clearly and conspicuously include language stating –

- the name or likeness of the candidate was included without their knowledge or authorization
- that any charitable donations to the candidate are not necessarily used for charitable purposes and may not be tax deductible

There are both civil and criminal penalties for violating these rules and the entity violating them would also be prohibited from soliciting donations for a period of time specified by the state board. Our members feel that this is a reasonable way to deter this type of fraudulent activity.

We strongly support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.