

CF 7r1540

By: Delegates C. Davis, Harrison, and Branch
Introduced and read first time: January 20, 1997
Assigned to: Commerce and Government Matters

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Commission to Study the State's Campaign Finance Laws**

3 FOR the purpose of creating a Commission to Study the State's Campaign Finance Laws;
4 specifying the composition, powers, and duties of the Commission; providing for the
5 staffing of the Commission; requiring the Commission to report its findings and
6 recommendations, including suggested legislative changes, to the Governor and the
7 General Assembly by a certain date; providing for the termination of this Act; and
8 generally relating to the establishment of the Commission to Study the State's
9 Campaign Finance Laws.

10 BY adding to

11 Article 41 - Governor - Executive and Administrative Departments
12 Section 18-313
13 Annotated Code of Maryland
14 (1993 Replacement Volume and 1996 Supplement)

15 Preamble

16 WHEREAS, Effective campaign finance laws should promote a fair electoral
17 process, as well as the public's confidence in that process; and

18 WHEREAS, Citizens of this State have expressed concerns that the current
19 campaign finance laws continue to promote the influence of large corporations, resulting
20 in a loss of representation for the average citizen; now, therefore,

21 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That
22 the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

23 **Article 41 - Governor - Executive and Administrative Departments**

24 18-313.

25 (A) THERE IS A COMMISSION TO STUDY THE STATE'S CAMPAIGN FINANCE
26 LAWS.

27 (B) THE COMMISSION SHALL BE COMPOSED OF TEN MEMBERS APPOINTED AS
28 FOLLOWS:

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1 (1) TWO INDIVIDUALS DESIGNATED BY THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE
2 OF DELEGATES AND ONE INDIVIDUAL DESIGNATED BY THE MINORITY LEADER OF
3 THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES;

4 (2) TWO INDIVIDUALS DESIGNATED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE
5 SENATE OF MARYLAND AND ONE INDIVIDUAL DESIGNATED BY THE MINORITY
6 LEADER OF THE SENATE;

7 (3) THREE INDIVIDUALS DESIGNATED BY THE GOVERNOR, AT LEAST
8 ONE OF WHOM SHALL BE A MEMBER OF THE MINORITY PARTY; AND

9 (4) ONE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY
10 GENERAL, APPOINTED BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.

11 (C) THE GOVERNOR SHALL DESIGNATE THE CHAIRMAN OF THE
12 COMMISSION.

13 (D) A MEMBER OF THE COMMISSION MAY NOT RECEIVE COMPENSATION FOR
14 SERVING ON THE COMMISSION, BUT IS ENTITLED TO REIMBURSEMENT FOR
15 EXPENSES UNDER THE STANDARD STATE TRAVEL REGULATIONS, AS PROVIDED IN
16 THE STATE BUDGET.

17 (E) THE COMMISSION SHALL:

18 (1) REVIEW ARTICLE 33 OF THE ANNOTATED CODE OF MARYLAND, AND
19 OTHER STATUTORY LAW RELATING TO ANY ASPECT OF CAMPAIGN FINANCE, FOR
20 ISSUES ABOUT CLARITY, PRECISION, CONSISTENCY, CONFORMITY, COMPLETENESS,
21 AND EFFECTIVENESS;

22 (2) REVIEW THE DEGREE OF COMPLIANCE WITH CAMPAIGN FINANCE
23 LAWS BY CANDIDATES AND COMMITTEES;

24 (3) REVIEW THE ENFORCEMENT CAPABILITIES OF THE STATE
25 ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD OF ELECTION LAWS AND THE LOCAL BOARDS;

26 (4) REVIEW THE LAW RELATING TO THE INTEGRATION OF COMPUTER
27 TECHNOLOGY INTO THE ADMINISTRATION OF CAMPAIGN FINANCE LAWS;

28 (5) REVIEW OTHER STATE CAMPAIGN FINANCE LAWS;

29 (6) REVIEW WHETHER THE LIMITATIONS ON CONTRIBUTIONS AND
30 FUND-RAISING UNDER THE CURRENT CAMPAIGN FINANCE LAWS SUFFICIENTLY
31 PROMOTE THE PUBLIC'S CONFIDENCE IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS; AND

32 (7) SUBMIT PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE LAW THAT WILL IMPROVE THE
33 ABILITY TO EFFECTIVELY REGULATE CAMPAIGN FUND-RAISING AND
34 EXPENDITURES AND ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH CAMPAIGN FINANCE LAWS.

35 (F) THE DEPARTMENT OF LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE SHALL PROVIDE THE
36 NECESSARY STAFF SERVICES TO THE COMMISSION.

37 (G) THE COMMISSION SHALL ISSUE A FINAL REPORT OF ITS FINDINGS AND
38 RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOVERNOR AND, SUBJECT TO § 2-1312 OF THE STATE

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1 GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 31,
2 1997.

3 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
4 June 1, 1997. It shall remain effective until December 31, 1997, and at the end of
5 December 31, 1997, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this Act
6 shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.