

SENATE BILL 72

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1998 Regular Session
8lr6120

(PRE-FILED)

By: **Chairman, Economic and Environmental Affairs Committee**
(Departmental - Elections, State Board of)

Requested: October 21, 1997

Introduced and read first time: January 14, 1998

Assigned to: Economic and Environmental Affairs

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Election Laws - Campaign Finance Reports - Computerization**

3 FOR the purpose of authorizing the State Administrative Board of Election Laws to
4 exempt certain candidates, certain accounts, and certain political committees
5 from the requirement that all campaign finance reports be filed with the State
6 Board in an electronic storage format; and generally relating to the filing and
7 maintenance of certain campaign finance reports in an electronic medium.

8 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
9 Article 33 - Election Code
10 Section 26-12
11 Annotated Code of Maryland
12 (1997 Replacement Volume and 1997 Supplement)

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

15 **Article 33 - Election Code**

16 26-12.

17 (a) The forms for the "Report or Statement of Campaign and Election
18 Contributions and Expenditures" and the "Schedule of Receipts and Disbursements"
19 shall be prescribed by the State Administrative Board of Election Laws.

20 (b) A candidate or candidates for election or elected to a public office of the
21 United States shall file a copy of each statement required by federal laws or
22 regulations with the State Administrative Board of Election Laws. Additional
23 campaign report filings by the candidate are not required.

24 (c) (1) (i) Except as provided in subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph,
25 beginning with the campaign finance report that is due in November 1997, all
26 campaign finance reports required under § 26-11 of this article which must be filed

1 with the State Administrative Board of Election Laws may be submitted to and
2 maintained by the State Board in an electronic storage format.

3 (ii) Beginning with the campaign finance report that is due in
4 November 1997, all campaign finance reports that are required under § 26-11 of this
5 article which must be filed with the State Board by a statewide candidate and any
6 political committee affiliated with the candidate shall be submitted to and
7 maintained by the State Board in an electronic storage format.

8 (2) (i) The State Administrative Board of Election Laws shall accept
9 any campaign finance report that is submitted in an electronic storage format which
10 meets the criteria developed by the State Board under subsection (f) of this section.

11 (ii) Beginning in November 1997, the State Board shall make the
12 campaign finance information that is submitted in an electronic storage format
13 available to the public by making the computer disk submitted by the candidate or
14 committee available for duplication.

15 (d) (1) Beginning with the campaign finance report due in November 1999,
16 all campaign finance reports required under § 26-11 of this article which must be
17 filed with the State Board shall be submitted and maintained by the State Board in
18 an electronic storage format.

19 (2) Beginning in November 1999, upon request, the State Administrative
20 Board of Election Laws shall supply to a person who is required to file reports in an
21 electronic storage format the computer software and the disks or other media on
22 which the campaign finance information is to be entered.

23 (3) Beginning in November 1999, the State Administrative Board of
24 Election Laws shall make the campaign finance information that is filed with and
25 maintained by the State Board in an electronic storage format widely and easily
26 accessible to the public, utilizing any existing public or private systems for data
27 dissemination, and on terms that the State Board considers consistent with the
28 purposes and requirements of this article.

29 (e) The State Board may:

30 (1) [refuse] REFUSE to accept or process any campaign finance report
31 that is incomplete or not submitted in accordance with the requirements of this
32 section; AND

33 (2) EXEMPT CANDIDATES, PERSONAL TREASURER ACCOUNTS, AND
34 POLITICAL COMMITTEES WITH DE MINIMIS FINANCIAL ACTIVITY FROM SUBMITTING
35 CAMPAIGN FINANCE REPORTS IN AN ELECTRONIC STORAGE FORMAT.

36 (f) The State Administrative Board of Election Laws shall:

37 (1) Develop specifications for the submission of campaign finance reports
38 in an electronic storage format; and

1 (2) Adopt regulations necessary to implement the requirements of this
2 section.

3 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take
4 effect June 1, 1998.