

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2000 Session

FISCAL NOTE
Revised

House Bill 621 (Delegate Dembrow. *et al.*)

Commerce and Government Matters

**Campaign Finance Law - State Officeholders - Reporting Requirement Following
Convening of the Legislative Session**

This bill adds an additional campaign finance statement to the reports required of the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, Comptroller, and members of the General Assembly. The additional statement must be filed by the third Monday following the beginning of the regular General Assembly session if more than a total of \$1,000 was received since the last report. The officeholders' fund-raising entities are also subject to the requirement. Reports will cover the time period from the most recent prior report up to the beginning of the General Assembly session and must be filed electronically in a format specified by the State Board of Elections. The bill's requirements are effective with the commencement of the General Assembly session that begins January 8, 2003.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: A one-time cost of approximately \$100,000 would be required for the software vendor employed by the State Board of Elections to modify the existing campaign finance database to include an additional reporting period. Beginning in FY 2003, board expenses for postage on reminder notices to officeholders would increase minimally.

Local Effect: Any additional maintenance of campaign financing statements by the local boards of elections could be supported with existing resources.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Most years, four campaign finance reports are required from officeholders who have continuing campaign accounts. The reports are due four Tuesdays before a primary election, two Fridays before a primary election, two Fridays before the general election, and three Tuesdays after the general election. Once every four years, when no elections take place, officeholders are required to submit only one report. At the end of every four-year election cycle, following the Maryland State elections, officeholders are also required to submit an end-of-the-cycle report which encompasses the time from the last report until the end of the calendar year.

The Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, Comptroller, and members of the General Assembly are not permitted to engage in fund-raising activities during the General Assembly session.

State Expenditures: According to the State Board of Elections and the software vendor it employs to maintain the campaign financing database, six months of work, at a total cost of approximately \$100,000, would be required to reprogram the database to capture another reporting period. This cost includes meetings to discuss the changes, actual reprogramming of the software, implementation of the new system, and the debugging of the database. The State Board of Elections also projects a minimal increase in administrative costs, beginning in fiscal 2003, to send out reminder notices to the officeholders.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): State Board of Elections, Department of Legislative Services

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