

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2000 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 1304 (Delegate Guns. *et al.*)

Commerce and Government Matters

Election Law - State or Local Central Committees - Contributions - Exemption from Electronic Filing Requirement

This bill allows a State or local central committee for a political party to submit campaign finance reports in non-electronic format if the committee did not receive more than \$10,000 in aggregate contributions during a calendar year. The committee may opt to submit reports electronically.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: It is expected that any additional data entry required by the bill could be supported with the existing resources of the State Board of Elections.

Local Effect: None. Campaign finance reports submitted to local boards of elections are not required to be in electronic format.

Small Business Effect: Potential minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: All campaign finance reports must be submitted in an electronic format approved by the State Board of Elections. The State Board of Elections may exempt candidates, personal treasurer accounts, and political committees with de minimis financial activity from the electronic reporting requirements. The definition established by the State Board of Elections for “de minimis financial activity” is less than \$5,000 in contributions during an election cycle.

Background: Beginning in November 1999, all campaign finance reports submitted to the State Board of Elections were required to be in electronic format unless they were granted a

special exemption by the board because of minimal fund raising activity. The board provides the necessary computer software and diskettes to any person required to file campaign finance reports.

State Expenditures: The State Board of Elections is required to manually enter into the campaign financing database any reports that are not provided in proper electronic format. Because the bill would allow for additional exceptions to the electronic filing requirement, more data would have to be entered manually. However, it is expected that any additional data entry could be handled with the existing resources of the State Board of Elections.

Small Business Effect: If the State Board of Elections contracts with a small business for the provision of data entry services, the business could realize a slight increase in profits due to the bill.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

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

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