

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2004 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

House Bill 976
Ways and Means

(Delegate Heller, *et al.*)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Election Law - Campaign Contributions - Receipts

This bill lowers, from \$51 to \$21, the cumulative dollar amount received from an individual as a campaign contribution or for the individual price of a ticket to a campaign event for which a treasurer or subtreasurer is required to issue a receipt. The bill also lowers, from \$251 to \$101, the cumulative dollar amount of ticket purchases to a campaign event for which a treasurer must issue a receipt to an individual purchaser.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill would not materially affect governmental finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The bill exempts a treasurer or subtreasurer from the receipt requirement when a person purchases one or more tickets for a campaign event at a cost between \$21 and \$51. In that case, the name and all other contributor information must be filed on a campaign finance report pursuant to State law. The aggregate of all contributions less than \$21 received by a campaign finance entity, may be reported on the campaign finance report as a lump sum.

Current Law: A treasurer or subtreasurer is required to mail or deliver a receipt upon receiving and before depositing a contribution from an individual who makes one or more contributions, other than the purchase of tickets for a campaign event, in the cumulative amount of \$51 or more, or who purchases one or more tickets for a campaign event at a cost of \$51 or more per ticket or in the cumulative amount of \$251 or more. At the request of a contributor, a treasurer or subtreasurer must issue a receipt for any other contribution. The State Board of Elections (SBE) rules allow the lump sum of all contributions received under \$51 (from different contributors) to be reported on a campaign finance report.

Background: SBE requires all campaign finance entities to report all contributions received from individuals, businesses, federal political committees, political clubs, and purchasers of tickets to campaign events. Certain contributions, including ticket sales, may be reported as a lump sum pursuant to the following guidelines:

- contributions under \$51 from different contributors may be aggregated and characterized on the Campaign Finance Report as “lump sum” contributions;
- ticket purchases under \$251 from different contributors (provided the purchase price of each individual ticket is \$50.99 or less) may be aggregated and characterized on the report as “lump sum ticket purchases;”
- once a contributor exceeds \$51 or \$251 through a series of contributions or ticket purchases for that election cycle, the contributor must thereafter be reported by name and address; and
- if a campaign finance entity chooses the lump sum option, even though receipts may be aggregated, the books and records required to be kept by the treasurer must identify all contributors, including ticket purchasers, by name, address, date of contribution, and amount, regardless of the amount.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

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

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Analysis by: Michelle L. Harrison-Davis

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510