

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2005 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

House Bill 141 (Delegate Holmes)  
Ways and Means

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**Election Law - Campaign Finance Entities - Expenditures - Methods of Disbursement**

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This bill authorizes a campaign finance entity to make a disbursement using a check card, credit card, or debit card attributed or attached to a designated campaign account.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Any modifications to the State Board of Election's electronic filing software could be handled with existing resources.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** Statute prohibits a campaign finance entity from directly or indirectly making a disbursement except by a check from a designated campaign account. A campaign finance entity or individual authorized by the entity may pay an expense of the entity from funds other than the campaign account if: (1) the expense is supported by a receipt provided to the campaign finance entity; and (2) the campaign finance entity reimburses the person who paid the expense by check from the campaign account and reports the expense as an expenditure of the campaign.

**Background:** An increasing number of vendors no longer accept paper checks for payment. Currently, check card, credit card, or debit card expenditures are made for a campaign by individuals, who are then reimbursed by check from the campaign account.

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## **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** Both HB 476 of 2003 and HB 170 of 2004 would have allowed campaign finance entities to make disbursements by check card or debit card. Both bills passed the House but were unfavorably reported by the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee.

**Cross File:** None.

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

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 3, 2005  
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