

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2024 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader

House Bill 1503
Ways and Means

(Delegate Roberts)

Education, Energy, and the Environment

Election Law - Campaign Finance Activities - State Treasurer

This bill prohibits the State Treasurer, and any person acting on behalf of the State Treasurer, from participating in certain campaign finance activities during a regular session of the General Assembly.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill is not anticipated to materially affect State operations or finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary/Current Law: Existing State campaign finance law prohibits the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the Attorney General, the Comptroller, and members of the General Assembly, or a person acting on any one of those officials' behalf, from – during a regular session of the General Assembly, and as to a federal, State, or local candidate or associated campaign finance entity – (1) receiving a contribution; (2) conducting a fund-raising event; (3) soliciting a contribution; or (4) depositing or using any contribution of money that was not deposited prior to the session. Exceptions apply for activities solely related to the official's election to an elective federal or local office for which the official is a filed candidate and for publicly financed gubernatorial tickets. In addition, a contribution may be deposited by an official, or a person acting on the official's behalf, during the legislative session, if the contribution was made electronically before the

start of the session. The bill adds the State Treasurer to the list of officials subject to the prohibition.

Under existing law, the campaign finance entity of an official in violation of the prohibition must refund the contribution to the contributor and pay a civil penalty of \$1,000 plus the amount of the contribution, unless the State Board of Elections at its discretion assesses a lesser penalty for good cause. Penalties are distributed to the Fair Campaign Financing Fund, which holds funds for public campaign financing of gubernatorial tickets under the Public Financing Act.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: None.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 12, 2024
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