

# SENATE BILL 575

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SB 1130/24 – SRU

5lr0795

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By: **Howard County Senators**

Introduced and read first time: January 23, 2025

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Howard County – Public Campaign Financing – Board of Education**

3 **Ho. Co. 3–25**

4 FOR the purpose of authorizing the governing body of Howard County to establish a system  
5 of public campaign financing for members of the county board of education; and  
6 generally relating to public campaign financing in Howard County.

7 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

8 Article – Election Law

9 Section 13–505

10 Annotated Code of Maryland

11 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

12 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
13 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

14 **Article – Election Law**

15 13–505.

16 (a) In this section, “contested election committee” means a contested election  
17 committee established under Title 12, Subtitle 3 of this article.

18 (b) (1) **(I)** Subject to the provisions of this section, the governing body of a  
19 county may establish, by law, a system of public campaign financing for elective offices in  
20 the executive or legislative branches of county government.

21 **(II) SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION, THE**  
22 **GOVERNING BODY OF HOWARD COUNTY MAY ESTABLISH, BY LAW, A SYSTEM OF**

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 **PUBLIC CAMPAIGN FINANCING FOR MEMBERS OF THE COUNTY BOARD OF**  
2 **EDUCATION.**

3 (2) A system of public financing established under paragraph (1) of this  
4 subsection may include public financing of a contested election committee.

5 (3) When establishing a system of public campaign financing for [elective  
6 offices in the executive or legislative branches of county government] **AN OFFICE UNDER**  
7 **PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION**, the governing body of a county shall:

8 (i) specify the criteria that are to be used to determine whether an  
9 individual is eligible for public campaign financing; and

10 (ii) provide the funding and staff necessary for the operation,  
11 administration, and auditing of the system of public campaign financing.

12 (c) A system of public campaign financing enacted under subsection (b) of this  
13 section:

14 (1) shall provide for participation of candidates in public campaign  
15 financing on a strictly voluntary basis;

16 (2) may not regulate candidates who choose not to participate in public  
17 campaign financing;

18 (3) shall prohibit the use of public campaign financing for any campaign  
19 except a campaign for [county] **LOCAL** elective office;

20 (4) shall require a candidate who accepts public campaign financing to:

21 (i) establish a campaign finance entity solely for the campaign for  
22 [county] **LOCAL** elective office; and

23 (ii) use funds from that campaign finance entity only for the  
24 campaign for [county] **LOCAL** elective office;

25 (5) shall prohibit a candidate who accepts public campaign financing from  
26 transferring funds:

27 (i) to the campaign finance entity established to finance the  
28 campaign for [county] **LOCAL** elective office from any other campaign finance entity  
29 established for the candidate; and

30 (ii) from the campaign finance entity established to finance the  
31 campaign for [county] **LOCAL** elective office to any other campaign finance entity;

1           (6) shall provide for a public election fund for [county] LOCAL elective  
2 offices that is administered by the chief financial officer of the county; and

3           (7) shall be subject to regulation and oversight by the State Board to ensure  
4 conformity with State law and policy to the extent practicable.

5           (d) A system of public campaign financing enacted under subsection (b) of this  
6 section may:

7           (1) provide for more stringent regulation of campaign finance activity by  
8 candidates who choose to accept public campaign financing, including contributions,  
9 expenditures, reporting, and campaign material, than is provided for by State law;

10           (2) provide for administrative penalties for violations, in accordance with §  
11 10–202 of the Local Government Article; and

12           (3) allow a publicly financed candidate to transfer any amount of funds  
13 from the candidate’s campaign finance entity to the candidate’s contested election  
14 committee.

15           SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June  
16 1, 2025.