

# HOUSE BILL 584

G1

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

6lr2299

---

By: **Delegate Stewart**

Introduced and read first time: January 28, 2026

Assigned to: Government, Labor, and Elections

---

## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Clean Maryland Democracy Amendment**

3 FOR the purpose of guaranteeing equal voting rights for all eligible voters; establishing  
4 that the people of Maryland have the right to elections that are free from improper  
5 foreign influence, undisclosed funding, and undue domination by large corporate  
6 interests; prohibiting the State, counties, and municipal corporations from denying,  
7 diluting, or abridging the right to vote based on certain protected classes; requiring  
8 the General Assembly to provide by law for a Maryland Voting Rights Act to protect  
9 the right to vote; prohibiting certain political spending in elections in the State by a  
10 foreign government, a foreign national, or a foreign-influenced corporation;  
11 requiring the General Assembly to provide by law a requirement of the disclosure of  
12 the ultimate sources of significant funds used for political spending; and establishing  
13 a Maryland Fair Elections Program to provide public campaign financing for  
14 candidates for the General Assembly.

15 BY proposing an addition to the Maryland Constitution  
16 Declaration of Rights  
17 Article 49 and 50

18 BY proposing an addition to the Maryland Constitution  
19 Article I – Elective Franchise  
20 Section 7A

21 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
22 (Three-fifths of all the members elected to each of the two Houses concurring), That it be  
23 proposed that the Maryland Constitution read as follows:

24 **Declaration of Rights**

25 **ARTICLE 49.**

---

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



**EQUAL VOTING RIGHTS ARE GUARANTEED TO ALL ELIGIBLE VOTERS.**

**ARTICLE 50.**

**THE PEOPLE OF MARYLAND HAVE THE RIGHT TO ELECTIONS THAT ARE FREE FROM IMPROPER FOREIGN INFLUENCE, UNDISCLOSED FUNDING, AND UNDUE DOMINATION BY LARGE CORPORATE INTERESTS.**

**Article I – Elective Franchise**

**7A.**

**(A) (1) THE STATE, A COUNTY, OR A MUNICIPAL CORPORATION MAY NOT ENACT OR EMPLOY A LAW, POLICY, OR PRACTICE THAT DENIES, DILUTES, OR ABRIDGES THE RIGHT TO VOTE ON ACCOUNT OF RACE, COLOR, LANGUAGE MINORITY STATUS, OR DISABILITY.**

**(2) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY SHALL PROVIDE BY LAW FOR A MARYLAND VOTING RIGHTS ACT TO PROTECT THE RIGHT TO VOTE THAT INCLUDES:**

**(I) PROTECTIONS AGAINST VOTE DILUTION;**

**(II) PROVISIONS FOR ACCESS TO VOTING FOR DISABLED INDIVIDUALS;**

**(III) PROVISIONS FOR PROVIDING LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE;**

**(IV) SAFEGUARDS AGAINST VOTER INTIMIDATION AND DECEPTION; AND**

**(V) APPROPRIATE ENFORCEMENT MECHANISMS, INCLUDING A PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION.**

**(3) THE LEGISLATION REQUIRED UNDER PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION SHALL TAKE EFFECT ON OR BEFORE JULY 1, 2028.**

**(B) (1) A FOREIGN GOVERNMENT, FOREIGN NATIONAL, OR FOREIGN-INFLUENCED CORPORATION MAY NOT, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, MAKE A CONTRIBUTION, A DONATION, AN INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURE, OR ANY ELECTIONEERING COMMUNICATION IN CONNECTION WITH AN ELECTION, INCLUDING STATE, COUNTY, MUNICIPAL CORPORATION, AND BALLOT ISSUE ELECTIONS.**

1           **(2) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY SHALL PROVIDE BY LAW:**

2                   **(I) A DEFINITION OF A FOREIGN-INFLUENCED CORPORATION**  
3 **FOR PURPOSES OF PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION;**

4                   **(II) A REQUIREMENT OF THE DISCLOSURE OF THE TRUE,**  
5 **ULTIMATE SOURCES OF SIGNIFICANT FUNDS USED FOR POLITICAL SPENDING,**  
6 **CONSISTENT WITH THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES; AND**

7                   **(III) APPROPRIATE PROVISIONS FOR THE ENFORCEMENT OF**  
8 **THIS SUBSECTION.**

9           **(3) THE LEGISLATION REQUIRED UNDER PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS**  
10 **SUBSECTION SHALL TAKE EFFECT ON OR BEFORE JULY 1, 2027.**

11           **(C) (1) IN THIS SUBSECTION, “PROGRAM” MEANS THE MARYLAND FAIR**  
12 **ELECTIONS PROGRAM.**

13                   **(2) THERE IS A MARYLAND FAIR ELECTIONS PROGRAM.**

14                   **(3) THE PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM IS TO PROVIDE PUBLIC**  
15 **CAMPAIGN FINANCING FOR CANDIDATES FOR THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.**

16                   **(4) PARTICIPATION IN THE PROGRAM SHALL BE VOLUNTARY FOR**  
17 **CANDIDATES FOR THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.**

18                   **(5) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY SHALL PROVIDE BY LAW FOR THE**  
19 **GOVERNANCE OF THE PROGRAM, INCLUDING:**

20                   **(I) CRITERIA FOR CANDIDATES FOR THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**  
21 **TO DEMONSTRATE SMALL DONOR SUPPORT TO QUALIFY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE**  
22 **PROGRAM;**

23                   **(II) LIMITS ON PRIVATE FUNDRAISING FOR CANDIDATES FOR**  
24 **THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY WHO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM;**

25                   **(III) A MARYLAND FAIR ELECTIONS FUND TO PROVIDE PUBLIC**  
26 **CAMPAIGN FINANCING UNDER THE PROGRAM; AND**

27                   **(IV) A STABLE AND SUSTAINABLE SOURCE OF REVENUE FOR THE**  
28 **MARYLAND FAIR ELECTIONS FUND.**

**(6) THE LEGISLATION REQUIRED UNDER PARAGRAPH (5) OF THIS SUBSECTION SHALL BE IN EFFECT BEGINNING WITH THE ELECTIONS FOR THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THAT ARE HELD IN 2030.**

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the General Assembly determines that the amendment to the Maryland Constitution proposed by Section 1 of this Act affects multiple jurisdictions and that the provisions of Article XIV, § 1 of the Maryland Constitution concerning local approval of constitutional amendments do not apply.

SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

(a) The amendment to the Maryland Constitution proposed by Section 1 of this Act shall be submitted to the qualified voters of the State at the next general election to be held in November 2026 for adoption or rejection in accordance with Article XIV of the Maryland Constitution.

(b) (1) At that general election, the vote on the proposed amendment to the Constitution shall be by ballot, and on each ballot there shall be printed the words “For the Constitutional Amendment” and “Against the Constitutional Amendment”, as now provided by law.

(2) At that general election, a question substantially similar to the following shall be submitted to the qualified voters of the State:

“Question \_\_\_\_ – Constitutional Amendment

Do you favor amending the Maryland Constitution to:

(1) require a Maryland Voting Rights Act that protects voters from discrimination and makes sure eligible voters can cast a ballot;

(2) ban foreign governments, foreign nationals, and foreign-influenced corporations from spending money in Maryland elections and require public disclosure of major political donors; and

(3) set up a voluntary “Fair Elections” program that gives public matching funds to candidates for the Maryland General Assembly who rely on small donations from Maryland residents?”.

(c) Immediately after the election, all returns shall be made to the Governor of the vote for and against the proposed amendment, as directed by Article XIV of the Maryland Constitution, and further proceedings held in accordance with Article XIV.