

HOUSE BILL 584

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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

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:

Declaration of Rights

ARTICLE 49.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 **EQUAL VOTING RIGHTS ARE GUARANTEED TO ALL ELIGIBLE VOTERS.**2 **ARTICLE 50.**3 **THE PEOPLE OF MARYLAND HAVE THE RIGHT TO ELECTIONS THAT ARE FREE**
4 **FROM IMPROPER FOREIGN INFLUENCE, UNDISCLOSED FUNDING, AND UNDUE**
5 **DOMINATION BY LARGE CORPORATE INTERESTS.**6 **Article I – Elective Franchise**7 **7A.**8 **(A) (1) THE STATE, A COUNTY, OR A MUNICIPAL CORPORATION MAY NOT**
9 **ENACT OR EMPLOY A LAW, POLICY, OR PRACTICE THAT DENIES, DILUTES, OR**
10 **ABRIDGES THE RIGHT TO VOTE ON ACCOUNT OF RACE, COLOR, LANGUAGE MINORITY**
11 **STATUS, OR DISABILITY.**12 **(2) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY SHALL PROVIDE BY LAW FOR A**
13 **MARYLAND VOTING RIGHTS ACT TO PROTECT THE RIGHT TO VOTE THAT INCLUDES:**14 **(I) PROTECTIONS AGAINST VOTE DILUTION;**15 **(II) PROVISIONS FOR ACCESS TO VOTING FOR DISABLED**
16 **INDIVIDUALS;**17 **(III) PROVISIONS FOR PROVIDING LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE;**18 **(IV) SAFEGUARDS AGAINST VOTER INTIMIDATION AND**
19 **DECEPTION; AND**20 **(V) APPROPRIATE ENFORCEMENT MECHANISMS, INCLUDING A**
21 **PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION.**22 **(3) THE LEGISLATION REQUIRED UNDER PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS**
23 **SUBSECTION SHALL TAKE EFFECT ON OR BEFORE JULY 1, 2028.**24 **(B) (1) A FOREIGN GOVERNMENT, FOREIGN NATIONAL, OR**
25 **FOREIGN-INFLUENCED CORPORATION MAY NOT, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, MAKE**
26 **A CONTRIBUTION, A DONATION, AN INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURE, OR ANY**
27 **ELECTIONEERING COMMUNICATION IN CONNECTION WITH AN ELECTION,**
28 **INCLUDING STATE, COUNTY, MUNICIPAL CORPORATION, AND BALLOT ISSUE**
29 **ELECTIONS.**

(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;

11 (c) (1) IN THIS SUBSECTION, "PROGRAM" MEANS THE MARYLAND FAIR
12 ELECTIONS PROGRAM.

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

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

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

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

8 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

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

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

19 “Question ___ – Constitutional Amendment

20 Do you favor amending the Maryland Constitution to:

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

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

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