

HB 962

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2026 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**First Reader**

House Bill 962 (Delegate Woorman, *et al.*)  
Government, Labor, and Elections

---

**Local Public Campaign Financing - County Boards of Education**

---

This bill authorizes the governing body of a county to establish, by law, a system of public campaign financing for elected members of the county board of education. **The bill takes effect January 1, 2027.**

---

**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** General fund expenditures increase by \$83,800 in FY 2028. Future years reflect ongoing costs. Revenues are not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	0	83,800	80,100	83,500	87,100
Net Effect	\$0	(\$83,800)	(\$80,100)	(\$83,500)	(\$87,100)

*Note: ( ) = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate increase; (-) = indeterminate decrease*

**Local Effect:** To the extent counties use the authority under the bill, county expenditures increase by a significant amount. Revenues are not materially affected.

**Small Business Effect:** Potential meaningful.

---

**Analysis**

**Current Law:** The governing body of a county may establish, by law, a system of public campaign financing for elective offices in the executive and legislative branches of county government. When establishing such a system, the governing body of a county must (1) specify the criteria for determining whether an individual is eligible for public

campaign financing and (2) provide the funding and staff necessary for the operation, administration, and auditing of the system of public campaign financing.

Various requirements apply to a system established by a governing body of a county, including that it must (1) be strictly voluntary; (2) not regulate candidates who choose not to participate in public campaign financing; and (3) be subject to regulation and oversight by the State Board of Elections (SBE) to ensure conformity with State law and policy to the extent practicable.

The following jurisdictions have enacted local laws establishing public campaign financing systems for executive and legislative offices:

- Anne Arundel County – beginning with the 2026 elections;
- Baltimore City – beginning with the 2024 elections;
- Baltimore County – beginning with the 2026 elections;
- Howard County – beginning with the 2022 elections;
- Montgomery County – beginning with the 2018 elections; and
- Prince George’s County – beginning with the 2026 elections.

**State Expenditures:** General fund expenditures increase by \$83,839 in fiscal 2028, which reflects the bill’s January 1, 2027 effective date, and an assumption that the fiscal impact begins July 1, 2027, ahead of the 2028 elections. This estimate (1) reflects the cost for SBE to hire one contractual staff to assist the director of candidacy and campaign finance with reviewing candidates’ requests for certification to participate in their respective county’s public campaign financing program, and their ongoing reporting, and (2) assumes more than minimal use of the bill’s expanded authority by counties, which SBE advises it cannot absorb with existing resources. The estimate includes a salary, fringe benefits, one-time start-up costs, and ongoing operating expenses.

Contractual Position	1.0
Salary and Fringe Benefits	\$73,976
Operating Expenses	<u>9,863</u>
<b>Total FY 2028 State Expenditures</b>	<b>\$83,839</b>

Future year expenditures reflect a salary with annual increases and employee turnover as well as annual increases in ongoing operating expenses.

This estimate does not include any health insurance costs that could be incurred for specified contractual employees under the State’s implementation of the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

**Local Fiscal Effect:** To the extent counties use the authority in the bill, county expenditures increase by a significant amount to provide the public funding distributed to participating board of education candidates and for any increased administrative costs (*e.g.*, contractual personnel) associated with administering the program for those candidates.

For context, Howard County indicates that it spent \$915,114, and Montgomery County indicates that it spent \$3.7 million (net of returned funds), in the 2022 elections, for distributions to candidates.

**Small Business Effect:** To the extent the bill results in additional campaign spending that otherwise would not occur, small businesses providing campaign consulting services and materials may meaningfully benefit.

---

### **Additional Information**

**Recent Prior Introductions:** Similar legislation has been introduced within the last three years. See HB 550 of 2025; HB 769 of 2024; and HB 176 and HB 213 of 2023.

**Designated Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Cecil, Frederick, Howard, Montgomery, and Somerset counties; Maryland State Board of Elections; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 23, 2026  
me/sdk

---

Analysis by: Arnold H. Adja

Direct Inquiries to:  
(410) 946-5510  
(301) 970-5510