

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 1405 (Delegate Healey, *et al.*)
Government, Labor, and Elections

Election Law - Campaign Finance Activities - Candidates for State Office

This bill prohibits candidates for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, Comptroller, State Treasurer, and member of the General Assembly, or a person acting on their behalf, from, during a regular session of the General Assembly, receiving a contribution, conducting a fundraising event, soliciting a contribution, or depositing or using any contribution of money that was not deposited prior to the session.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The State Board of Elections (SBE) can implement the bill’s changes with existing resources. Special fund (Fair Campaign Financing Fund) revenues may increase annually, beginning in FY 2027.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: State campaign finance law prohibits the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the Attorney General, the Comptroller, the State Treasurer, and members of the General Assembly, or a person acting on one of those officials’ behalf, from – during a regular session of the General Assembly, and as to a federal, State, or local candidate or a campaign finance entity of the candidate or operated in coordination with the candidate – (1) receiving a contribution; (2) conducting a fundraising 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 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 SBE 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.

State Revenues: Special fund (Fair Campaign Financing Fund) revenues may increase annually, beginning in fiscal 2027, to the extent penalty revenues are collected. The extent of any increase cannot be reliably estimated.

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 3, 2026
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