

BRIAN E. FROSH
Attorney General



ELIZABETH HARRIS
Chief Deputy Attorney General

CAROLYN QUATTROCKI
Deputy Attorney General

FACSIMILE NO.

STATE OF MARYLAND
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

WRITER'S DIRECT DIAL NO.
410-576-6584

January 28, 2020

To: The Honorable Anne R. Kaiser
Chair, Ways and Means Committee

From: Hannibal G. Williams II Kemerer, Legislative Director, Office of the Attorney General

Re: HB 34 Campaign Finance – Contributions, Expenditures, or Donations by Foreign-Influenced Corporations or Foreign Principals (SUPPORT)

House Bill 34 prohibits a foreign-influenced corporation or foreign principal from making a contribution or independent expenditure to a campaign finance entity. It further prohibits foreign-influenced corporations or foreign principals from making electioneering communications for a campaign. The legislation also requires corporations that do make contributions, independent expenditures, or electioneering communications to, within 7 days, file a statement with the State Board of Elections certifying that, after due inquiry, the corporation was not a foreign-influenced corporation on the date of the contribution, independent expenditure, or electioneering communication.

We know from the 2016 presidential election that foreign entities sought to influence the outcome in favor of one candidate and at the expense of another. The Office of Attorney General strongly believes that safeguarding our elections from foreign influence is a matter of utmost urgency and that this measure should garner bipartisan, unanimous, support. For all of the foregoing reasons, we urge the Committee to favorably report HB 34.

cc: Members of the Judiciary Committee

