

The Honorable Paul Pinsky, Chair
and Members of the Committee on
Education, Health & Environmental Affairs
Senate of Maryland
Annapolis, Maryland

RE: SB 415 – Public Financing of Elections for Governor – OPPOSED
SB 416 – Expanding Public Funding to Senate & House Races – OPPOSED

Dear Chair Pinsky and Committee Members,

I am very strongly opposed to mandating using taxpayers' dollars to fund political campaigns for State level elections of Governor (SB 415) and State Senate and House of Delegates (SB 416).

The current voluntary contributions fund is o.k. because each person can decide if they wish to contribute to the fund. But forcing taxpaying citizens to pay \$4 million a year in taxes for political campaigns is WRONG.

Our State and Country are in in the middle of a once in a century pandemic and the borrowed money that is providing payments to citizens, unemployment, rental assistance, medical services, and COVID 19 tests and vaccines will have to be repaid and come from somewhere. Guess where? The taxpayers.

The legislation itself has several curious provisions – including allowing “eligible private contributions” would that mean contributions from out of state? PACS? It doesn't appear to restrict “in-kind” contributions just not allow them to count toward the base qualifying contributions. The fund would provide funding for 2 campaigns in the Primary Election and 1 campaign in the General Election. Is that 2 campaigns for each political party? Unaffiliated? Or is the bill providing for funding one campaign in the General Election? Who would decide which political party's candidates would receive the funding if in fact a campaign from each political party qualifies? If you want to run for office you should raise your own campaign funds. If citizens support you they will contribute to your campaign, but no way should they be forced to.

This legislation is unnecessary, exorbitantly expensive, and under current conditions unconscionable. Please give SB 415 and SB 416 an UNFAVORABLE report.

Sincerely,
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