



TESTIMONY FOR HB0344

Election Law - Campaign Finance - Contributions (Prohibiting Pay to Play Act of 2022)

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Palakovich-Carr

Committee: Ways and Means

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0344 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of individuals and grassroots groups with members in every district in the state with well over 30,000 members.

Elections have consequences. In Maryland, we seem to be ok with the idea that elections could have very profitable consequences for certain businesses. We allow lobbyists to make contributions to the campaigns of the people they will be lobbying. We allow businesses to make contributions to the campaigns of the people they expect to get contracts from. It's called Pay-to-Play and it is outlawed in many states.

As constituents, our members would like to know that their votes are important and that the candidates they are voting for have their interests at heart, and are not already in the pocket of lobbyists or businesses whose goals are often very divergent.

This bill would prohibit lobbyists from contributing to the campaigns of the people they would be lobbying, unless they live in-District and wish to contribute to the candidates who represent them. It would also prohibit businesses from contributing to the campaigns of Government officials (Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Comptroller, Attorney General) who make determinations on bids or contracts in excess of \$200,000.

We think this makes our elections more democratic and gives constituents a bigger voice in choosing the people who will represent their interests. We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.