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BILL NO.: Senate Bill 358

TITLE: Public Financing Act – State Senate and House of Delegates

SPONSOR: Senator Pinsky

COMMITTEE: Education, Health and Environmental Affairs

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

DATE: February 23, 2022

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 358 – Public Financing Act – State Senate and House of Delegates. This legislation would expand the elected State level offices that qualify for public financing.

In his first month in office, County Executive Olszewski pledged that he would enact a local campaign financing system to level the playing field for all willing, engaged community members to get involved in local government. In December 2021, the Fair Election Fund was established. Beginning in 2026, those lacking connections to large donors will not be precluded from having a competitive run for County Council and County Executive, and County voters will hear the voices of community advocates who are able to capitalize on their strong ties to the community.

SB 358 will expand the State public financing program to include candidates for State Senate and the House of Delegates. Expanding campaign financing will encourage a stronger, larger, and more diverse pool of candidates to represent their communities in some of State government’s most critical positions.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 358. For more information, please contact Joel Beller, Acting Director of Government Affairs at jbeller@baltimorecountymd.gov.