

February 23, 2022

Testimony on Senate Bill 358
Public Financing Act – State Senate and House of Delegates
Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

Position: Favorable

Maryland Nonprofits is a statewide organization comprised of over 1300 member nonprofit agencies, associations and institutions, and our purpose is to support and enhance the effectiveness of the State's more than 30,000 nonprofit groups in carrying out their missions of public and community service. We urge your support for Senate Bill 358.

Nonprofit organizations typically evolve from individuals seeking to improve some aspect of life in their communities or to meet the needs of fellow citizens. Their effectiveness hinges on the credibility and trust that is crucial to their support by the public. The programs they provide, or the people for whom they are advocates, also depend on the ability of government to work effectively, with sustained support and engagement of the public.

As an association we believe that public trust and confidence in governmental institutions, and participation in our political process, is seriously threatened by growing skepticism and disenchantment with an electoral process that seems increasingly dominated by the need to fund-raise.

More and more the public generally assumes that campaign contributions and fund-raising are an essential part of having an effective voice in Annapolis.

The continuing decline of public trust in government and engagement in the electoral process is a trend that must be reversed, and faith that our legislature and other public institutions act in the public and not special interests is critical.

We urge you act favorably on Senate Bill 358.