

REPRESENT MARYLAND

#FIGHT FOR
DEMOCRACY

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BILL: HB0340

BILL TITLE: Election Law - Campaign Finance - Enforcement

BILL SPONSOR: Delegate D. Jones

COMMITTEE: Ways and Means

POSITION: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

HEARING DATE: February 8, 2022

TESTIMONY ON HB0340

Represent Maryland is a grassroots, all volunteer group of voters who believe in democracy and oppose corruption. We formed in 2015 to fight against the influence of big money in politics and to ensure that everyone can participate in our democratic system of governance, regardless of financial status. In theory, we support this bill. However, we believe it should be modified to improve accountability and access.

We agree that potential candidates should be held to account for intentionally violating the provisions listed in the bill. We do not want dark money in our politics, and this bill helps address that issue. We also agree that potential candidates should not be penalized if the violation was unintentional or without criminal intent.

However, intent is difficult to determine. Therefore, we propose that the bill be amended so that the less severe penalty is only applied to first-time violators. That way, determining how to penalize someone becomes a much more objective process. Repeat offenses would never be allowed, regardless of intent, which helps systematically address dark money in politics. First-time offenses would always receive the less severe penalty, which helps new candidates navigate an unintuitive system.

We ask that this bill be amended to prevent repeat offenses and to be more forgiving to new candidates.

Sincerely,
Anthony Caruso, Member
Represent Maryland
Maryland Voter-LD06

Represent Maryland is a grassroots anti-corruption group of citizen advocates that #FightForDemocracy in Maryland. Our democracy solutions include: Public Election Funds, Independent Redistricting, Special Elections, Ranked Choice Voting, Increased Ethics and Transparency, and Increased Voter Participation. Learn more about our work at www.RepresentMaryland.org
Authorized by Represent Maryland PAC, T Miller, Treasurer