

# REPRESENT MARYLAND

.ORG

#FIGHT FOR

DEMOCRACY

**BILL:** HB0488

**BILL TITLE:** Local Public Campaign Financing – Expansion to Additional Offices

**BILL SPONSOR:** Delegates Feldmark, Charkoudian, Davis, Ebersole, Hill, Lehman, R. Lewis, Lopez, Love, Ruth, Terrasa, and P. Young

**COMMITTEE:** Ways and Means

**POSITION:** FAVORABLE

**HEARING DATE:** February 8, 2022

## TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF HB0488

Represent Maryland is an all-volunteer, member and individual donor-funded group of activists and advocates who fight for democracy at the local and state level. 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.

Public Election Funds are the #1 solution that Represent Maryland advocates for in order to expand and secure democracy for the future. Although our voter roles have grown over the last 150 years to include nearly all citizens of the USA, access to the resources needed to successfully run for public office has narrowed. Currently, successful candidates must be willing to accept large money donations from the smallest group of people or be able to fund their campaign themselves. There is nothing democratic about that.

Through courting big money donors, candidates-turned-lawmakers grow increasingly out of touch with the needs and struggles of the average voter. This is very apparent in policy decisions that help corporations and the wealthy while putting more burdens on the working class.

If this legislature wants the future of Maryland to be a democratic one, where all people's voices are heard and valued, you must act now to strengthen our only existing alternative funding source from which average people of various backgrounds and experience can fund their campaigns for elected office and win. Although they are not legislative, the roles of sheriff, state's attorney, and other elected positions have influence over society and should not be corrupted by the big money system. Including these seats in a public campaign finance system is the next step in democratizing our elections.

Please find this bill favorable.

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](http://www.RepresentMaryland.org)

Authorized by Represent Maryland PAC, T Miller, Treasurer