JOHN A. OLSZEWSKI, JR.
County Executive

JOEL N. BELLER
Acting Director of Government Affairs

JOSHUA M. GREENBERG
Associate Director of Government Affairs

MIA R. GOGEL
Associate Director of Government Affairs

BILL NO.: **HB 488**

TITLE: Local Public Campaign Financing – Expansion to Additional Offices

SPONSOR: Delegate Feldmark

COMMITTEE: Ways and Means

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

DATE: February 8, 2022

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** House Bill 488 – Local Public Campaign Financing – Expansion to Additional Offices. This enabling legislation would expand the elected offices for which local jurisdictions may establish a system of 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.

HB 488 will drastically expand local public financing programs to include elections for State's Attorney, Sheriff, Register of Wills, judge and clerk of the Circuit Court, judge of the Orphans' Court, and the Board of Education. This legislation will encourage a stronger, larger, and more diverse pool of candidates to represent their communities across the myriad functions of local government.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on HB 488. For more information, please contact Joel Beller, Acting Director of Government Affairs at jbeller@baltimorecountymd.gov.