



Get Money Out – Maryland

Baltimore County Progressive Democrats Club

Baltimore Nonviolence Center

Be the Change Bmore

Caucus of African American Leaders of Anne Arundel

Chesapeake Climate Action Network

Common Cause Maryland

Don't Shop on Tuesdays

Indivisible Central Maryland

Indivisible Howard County

Indivisible Montgomery

Indivisible Worcester

J Walkers Action Group

League of Women Voters of Baltimore City

Maryland Legislative Coalition

Maryland Peace Action

Maryland Poor People's Campaign

Maryland United for Peace and Justice

Matthew Henson Community Development Center

National Association of Social Workers - Maryland

Our Revolution Maryland

Progressive Maryland

Randallstown Branch NAACP

Represent Maryland

Represent.US

St. Ignatius Justice & Peace Committee

Southwest Baltimore County Democratic Club

WISE –Women Indivisible Strong Effective

**March 28, 2023**

**Support: SB 111 – Campaign Finance – Draft Committees and Exploratory Committees**

**Charlie Cooper, Convener**

For the People – Maryland is a coalition of nonprofit advocacy and community organizations that stands for political equality. Every citizen should have equal access to the ballot as a voter or as a candidate. District lines should be fair to every voter, regardless of race, ethnicity, or party affiliation. The corruption of big money in politics must be eliminated, and the disproportionate influence of concentrated wealth reduced.

We support Senate Bill 111 because it closes loopholes that may allow big money corruption in Maryland elections. If exploratory committees do not have the same reporting requirements as candidate committees, there may be an incentive to defer declaring candidacy and use the exploratory committee to hide contributions and spending. Similarly, if draft committees do not have the same reporting requirements as candidate committees, there would be a temptation for the prospective candidate to coordinate efforts with the draft committee and use that committee to avoid reporting.

These loopholes could eventually lead to systematic flouting of Maryland campaign finance law. Professional operatives could help candidates avoid scrutiny by utilizing the draft and exploratory committee ruses. We have seen similar ploys in presidential politics. This bill is remarkably simple and closes the door on potential mischief.

Please promote campaign finance integrity by giving your favorable report to Senate Bill 111.