



TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

HB 769 Local Public Campaign Financing – Expansion to Additional Offices

POSITION – Support

BY: LINDA KOHN

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The League of Women Voters supports methods of financing political campaigns that:

- Enhance political equality for all citizens
- Ensure maximum participation by citizens in the political process and protect representative democracy from being distorted by big spending in election campaigns
- Enable candidates to compete equitably for public office;
- Ensure that candidates have sufficient funds to communicate their messages to the public; and combat corruption and undue influence in government.

Allowing local governments to voluntarily implement public campaign finance programs for local elected offices is one way to achieve these goals. Thanks to legislation previously passed by the Maryland General Assembly, counties may establish their own system of public campaign financing for County Executive and County Council candidates. Experience has shown that it has been effective in encouraging a larger and more diverse pool of candidates, who seem to have a better chance of competing against more traditionally-financed candidates.

The legislation before you would offer counties the option to expand public financing to State's Attorney, Sheriff, Register of Wills, Judge of the Circuit Court, Clerk of the Circuit Court, Judge of the Orphan's Court.

We urge a favorable report on HB 769