

**February 20, 2024**

**Testimony on HB 792**  
**Election Law – Campaign Finance – Draft Committees and Exploratory Committees**  
**Ways and Means**

**Position:** Favorable

Common Cause Maryland is in support of HB 792, which would apply certain campaign finance requirements and prohibitions to draft committees and exploratory committees.

Maryland has a well-developed system of campaign finance law, a system that ensures everyday citizens can trace who is making donations and what special interest voices are being heard in that process. Given the amount of money that can be spent testing the feasibility of an individual's candidacy, we believe that both draft and exploratory committees should be required to adhere to the same level of scrutiny - it is critical that citizens be able to see who is funding these efforts.

Current Maryland law does not provide specific oversight for exploratory and draft committees. HB 792 corrects this issue by ensuring these committees are subject to the same regulations that keep our campaign finance committees transparent, limiting the purpose for which funds may be expended, and codifying a specific process for their dissolution.

This bill will allow for greater disclosure around these committees, giving the public the opportunity to see who is spending time and money to influence our elections. For these reasons, we request a favorable report on HB 792.