



Maryland Forward Party

January 31, 2025

Maryland Forward Party

PJ Benenati, Chair

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SB 027:

Senate - Election Law, Campaign Finance, Exploratory Committees

Position: Favorable

Dear Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Maryland Forward Party and our 6,000 Maryland supporters. Forward Party is among the fastest growing political organizations in the United States and in Maryland. Our organization is dedicated to promoting and enhancing our democracy in Maryland. We also believe that all Maryland taxpayers and voters should have an opportunity to be heard, and that funds contributed to potential or actual candidates should be utilized for their intended purpose and accounted for transparently.

In Maryland, we see a need to reform the process through which potential candidates considering running for a particular office can solicit funds for an exploratory committee, then move those funds to a political committee when they run for a different office.



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SB 027 sets forth new rules that require clear separation, delineation and accountability for finances for exploratory committees and political committees. These rules prevent a potential candidate (or person currently in public office) from utilizing funds intended by the donor for one purpose, to be utilized by a candidate for a purpose not specifically intended by the donor. It also prevents candidates from creating exploratory committees simply to collect and amass funds for future unspecified political activities.

SB 027 will ensure that funds contributed to a potential candidate for a specific effort will be utilized specifically for that effort. SB027 also provides mechanisms for exploratory committee funds to either be provided back to the donors, utilized by state/local central committees for future candidates, or in fact utilized by the candidate's political committee if he/she runs for the office considered by the exploratory committee.

Respectfully

PJ Benenati

Maryland Forward Party, Chair

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