



TESTIMONY

SB0931 – Maryland Public Ethics Law – Virtual Currency and Domestic Partners

Bill Sponsor: Senator Harris

Committee: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Aileen Alex, Co-Chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in support of SB0931 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. We are an association of unpaid citizen advocates—individuals and grassroots groups in every district across the state—representing and supporting more than 30,000 Marylanders.

SB0931 updates Maryland’s Public Ethics Law to reflect the realities of modern financial and family life. The bill requires public officials and candidates to disclose interests in virtual currency, ensuring that digital assets are treated with the same transparency as traditional financial holdings. It also updates the law to include domestic partners and registered domestic partners in the same disclosure requirements that currently apply to spouses. These are straightforward, common-sense updates that bring Maryland’s ethics framework in line with how people actually live and invest today.

For too many years, campaign financing has been shaped by the influence of large contributors, creating situations where candidates may feel pressure to align with the interests of those who fund their campaigns. While SB0931 is not a campaign finance bill, it strengthens the same foundation of public trust. When financial interests are fully disclosed, including newer forms of assets, it becomes harder for hidden conflicts to shape public decision-making. Transparency helps ensure that elected officials are accountable to the people they serve, not to private financial incentives.

SB0931 directly supports the mission of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. Our mission includes providing information to help inform voters. This bill supports that effort. Therefore, we respectfully urge a **FAVORABLE** report on SB0931.