



TESTIMONY FOR HB0584
Clean Maryland Democracy Amendment

Bill Sponsors: Delegate Stewart

Committee: House Government, Labor, and Elections

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Aileen Alex, Cochair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in support of HB0584 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.

HB0584, the *Clean Maryland Democracy Amendment*, is a comprehensive constitutional amendment designed to strengthen Maryland’s ability to protect its elections from undue influence, discrimination, and the corrosive effects of big money. It addresses several problems that have deeply troubled me at the federal level—problems that have weakened public trust and made it harder for ordinary people to believe their voices matter.

First, the bill explicitly prohibits foreign governments, foreign nationals, and foreign-influenced corporations from spending money in Maryland elections. We have watched foreign influence seep into federal politics in ways that are alarming and destabilizing.

Second, the bill requires the General Assembly to enact a state-level Voting Rights Act by July 1, 2028. This “Maryland Voting Rights Act” would protect voters from discrimination, vote dilution, and intimidation—issues that have resurfaced nationally in ways that should concern all of us.

Third, HB0584 establishes the Maryland Fair Elections Program, expanding public financing to General Assembly candidates who qualify through small-dollar support. This is a direct response to the federal landscape, where dark money and unlimited outside spending have overwhelmed the voices of everyday voters.

HB0584 directly supports the mission of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. A constitutional amendment that strengthens campaign finance rules, protects voting rights, and limits foreign influence aligns with our commitment to transparency, equity, and democratic accountability.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge a **FAVORABLE** report on HB0584.