

**February 4, 2026**

**Testimony on HB 157  
Election Law – Campaign Finance – Exploratory Committees  
Government, Labor, and Elections**

**Position:** Favorable

Common Cause Maryland is in support of HB 157, which would apply certain existing campaign finance requirements and prohibitions to exploratory committees.

Maryland has a well-developed system of campaign finance law, a system that ensures everyday citizens are able trace who is making donations and what special interest voices are being heard within the election process. Given the amount of money that can be spent testing the feasibility of an individual’s candidacy, we strongly believe that 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.

This legislation will allow for greater disclosure and transparency 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 157.