

HOUSE BILL 962

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By: **Delegates Woorman, Acevero, Behler, Kaufman, Palakovich Carr, Terrasa, and Wims**

Introduced and read first time: February 6, 2026

Assigned to: Government, Labor, and Elections

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Local Public Campaign Financing – County Boards of Education**

3 FOR the purpose of authorizing the governing body of a county to establish a system of
4 public campaign financing for elected members of the county board of education; and
5 generally relating to the expansion of local public campaign financing.

6 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

7 Article – Election Law

8 Section 13–505

9 Annotated Code of Maryland

10 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

11 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
12 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

13 **Article – Election Law**

14 13–505.

15 (a) In this section, “contested election committee” means a contested election
16 committee established under Title 12, Subtitle 3 of this article.

17 (b) (1) Subject to the provisions of this section, the governing body of a county
18 may establish, by law, a system of public campaign financing for:

19 (I) elective offices in the executive or legislative branches of county
20 government; OR

21 (II) ELECTED MEMBERS OF THE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (2) A system of public financing established under paragraph (1) of this
2 subsection may include public financing of a contested election committee.

3 (3) When establishing a system of public campaign financing for [elective
4 offices in the executive or legislative branches of county government] **AN OFFICE UNDER**
5 **PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION**, the governing body of a county shall:

6 (i) specify the criteria that are to be used to determine whether an
7 individual is eligible for public campaign financing; and

8 (ii) provide the funding and staff necessary for the operation,
9 administration, and auditing of the system of public campaign financing.

10 (c) A system of public campaign financing enacted under subsection (b) of this
11 section:

12 (1) shall provide for participation of candidates in public campaign
13 financing on a strictly voluntary basis;

14 (2) may not regulate candidates who choose not to participate in public
15 campaign financing;

16 (3) shall prohibit the use of public campaign financing for any campaign
17 except a campaign for [county] **LOCAL** elective office;

18 (4) shall require a candidate who accepts public campaign financing to:

19 (i) establish a campaign finance entity solely for the campaign for
20 [county] **LOCAL** elective office; and

21 (ii) use funds from that campaign finance entity only for the
22 campaign for [county] **LOCAL** elective office;

23 (5) shall prohibit a candidate who accepts public campaign financing from
24 transferring funds:

25 (i) to the campaign finance entity established to finance the
26 campaign for [county] **LOCAL** elective office from any other campaign finance entity
27 established for the candidate; and

28 (ii) from the campaign finance entity established to finance the
29 campaign for [county] **LOCAL** elective office to any other campaign finance entity;

30 (6) shall provide for a public election fund for [county] **LOCAL** elective
31 offices that is administered by the chief financial officer of the county; and

1 (7) shall be subject to regulation and oversight by the State Board to ensure
2 conformity with State law and policy to the extent practicable.

3 (d) A system of public campaign financing enacted under subsection (b) of this
4 section may:

5 (1) provide for more stringent regulation of campaign finance activity by
6 candidates who choose to accept public campaign financing, including contributions,
7 expenditures, reporting, and campaign material, than is provided for by State law;

8 (2) provide for administrative penalties for violations, in accordance with §
9 10–202 of the Local Government Article; and

10 (3) allow a publicly financed candidate to transfer any amount of funds
11 from the candidate’s campaign finance entity to the candidate’s contested election
12 committee.

13 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
14 January 1, 2027.