



Maryland Chapter

Maryland United for Peace and Justice, Inc.

Mattawoman
Watershed Society



Maryland Conservation Council
Protecting Maryland's Natural Heritage Since 1969

March 21, 2013

**Testimony on SB 1039 – Campaign Finance Reform Act of 2013
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs**

Position: Favorable with Amendments

The groups listed above support SB 1039, which would limit the influence of big money in our politics by closing loopholes and increasing reporting requirements in campaign law.

The Campaign Finance Reform Act of 2013 (SB1039/HB1499) would:

- Enable local governments to establish a system for public funding of elections;
- Close the loopholes that allow unlimited contributions from LLCs;
- Place limits on how campaign funds can be transferred among multi-candidate slates;
- Expand reporting requirements for out-of-state PACs, as well as for independent expenditures and electioneering communications, which have risen exponentially since the Supreme Court's decision in *Citizens United*;
- Establish civil penalties to enforce our campaign laws; and
- Increase reporting for potential conflicts of interest in the procurement process.

Passing these reforms would be a huge step forward for Maryland.

The bill does need some reform, and we support amendments that would:

- Lower the proposed aggregate campaign limit and eliminate indexing of contribution limits;
- Require greater reporting of expenditures made on behalf of candidates by party caucus committees and slates;
- Require greater disclosure of donors to independent expenditure or electioneering communications, including covered transfers.

In this post-*Citizens United* era, money is more pervasive than ever in elections. SB 1039 is a critical opportunity to close significant loopholes in Maryland's law and increase reporting requirements for dark money. But we must be careful that in closing those avenues we are not creating new channels for money to follow. We urge a favorable report with amendments.