



HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

3430 Court House Drive ■

Ellicott City, Maryland 21043 ■

410-313-2061

Citizens' Election Fund Commission
citizenselectionfund@howardcountymd.gov

FAX 410-313-4433

Date: October 19, 2021

To: Honorable Calvin Ball, County Executive
Honorable Members of the County Council
Liz Walsh, Council Chairperson
Opel Jones, Council Vice Chairperson
Deb Jung
Christiana Rigby
David Yungmann

Through: Rafiu Ighile, Director *RI*
Department of Finance

Kimberly Boyd-Washington, Deputy Director *KBW*
Department of Finance

Justin Prister, Administrative Manager *JP*
Bureau of Revenue

Diane Zagorski, Chief, Director Designee *DZ*
Bureau of Tax & Specialty Services

From: Sue Geckle, Chair
Citizens' Election Fund

RE: Emergency Legislation Request

In its review of the law, the Citizens' Election Fund Commission noticed an item in the County Code that needs immediate correction in order to successfully implement the Citizens Election Fund Program.

Section §10.306 (a)(3) of the law generally provides that the Director of Finance cannot disburse a public contribution to a candidate unless it is a contested election. However, paragraph (a)(3)(i) specifically states: "For the purposes of this paragraph, whether an election is contested shall be determined on the first Tuesday in August preceding the election." As written, there could be no contested election for the Council/Executive primary, which is scheduled to take place on June 28, 2022. As the law is written, the determination for a contested election for the June 2022 primary would have been determined on August 3, 2021, which has already passed. On that date, there were no candidates that had already filed a certificate of candidacy.



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While we are not entirely sure of the purpose of the paragraph, at the least, we recommend emergency legislation to specify that the August deadline is for determining whether a **general election** is contested.

The Commission is also looking at other topics that may need clarification in the future, including clarifying how contributions from candidates and family members, which are allowed under §10.302(b), are treated in terms of matching funds and their status in collecting qualifying contributions.

Sincerely,

Sue Geckle

Sue Geckle
Chair, Citizens' Election Fund Commission

CC: Kristen Perry, Office of Law
Amanda Mihill, Office of Law
Citizen's Election Fund Commission