

Written Testimony on CR27-2016 Elections-Citizen Funded Campaigns Charter Amdt

William Roberts [William@everyvoice.org]

Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2016 1:14 PM

To: CouncilMail

Attachments: Every Voice Written Testim~1.pdf (83 KB)

Good Morning, please accept this written testimony on the Citizen Funded Campaigns Charter Amendment for tonight's public hearing. Please contact me if you have any questions. Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

William

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William J. Roberts, Esq.
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Referring to Resolution 27-2016

Jennifer Youssef [jennifer.youssef@gmail.com]

Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2016 10:58 AM

To: CouncilMail

Attachments: Jennifer Youssef Resume.pdf (106 KB) ; ATT00001.htm (218 B)

Hi, this is Jennifer Youssef and I'm from Ellicott City, MD. I want to thank you for considering a Howard County program to stand up to mega-donors and give political power back to the people. I hope you will vote in favor of establishing a program to empower small donors to amplify the voice of everyday citizens and reduce the influence of large donors.

I know that small donor empowerment and campaign finance reform is important to many people. Because it can give people like me a voice.

Montgomery County set up a similar system in 2014, and I think Howard County should be next!

Side Note: I am also attaching my resume. I am need of a job and I'd be willing to do anything.

Jennifer Youssef

Small Donor Empowerment

Pam Clough [pam@marylandpirg.org]

Sent: Monday, February 15, 2016 2:28 PM**To:** CouncilMail

Letter to the editor written by Larry Carson- he wanted me to forward to you all.

From: larry Carson [mailto:karasov1@hotmail.com]**Sent:** Thursday, February 11, 2016 3:31 PM**To:** hcletters@tribune.com; pam@marylandpirg.org**Subject:** A poor editorial

The Flier's editorial "An Emerging Idea for public campaign financing in local races Feb.11, 2016) panning a proposed charter amendment to create a new system of small-donor campaign financing for candidates running for county council and county executive was short-sighted to say the least. The whole idea is to use minimal public funding to bolster small donations-usually those of \$50 or less, to get many more average citizens involved in government, while reducing the influence of big money special interests like developers, zoning lawyers and lobbyists. It would also encourage a broader group of candidates, since they would not be so dependent on those same big money donors to finance a campaign. Under the plan, a commission would set the program's rules, which might allow, for example, a \$10 donation to be matched with \$40 in public funds, while a \$50 donation, might be doubled, up to a predetermined ceiling.

Since it is a charter amendment, if the county council approves, the issue would be voted up or down by the county's citizens. If they don't approve, it would not become law.

The Flier takes a myopic view.

Nationally, most people agree that politicians are having to spend way too much time courting big money donors, who obviously expect something in return for their support. Since Congress often responds to those donors more readily than to pure public interest, there is little chance for a change in how federal campaign finance is done.

But Howard County citizens have a chance to stand up and make a change locally, and if enough localities, and perhaps later, states, go to a similar small-donor system like the one Maryland Rep. John R. Sarbanes is promoting in Congress, using private funds, perhaps we can eventually achieve a major change. Is Tribune opposed to more public participation in elections or to the county's voters having a say? I hope not.

Larry Carson

Columbia

410-381-6506

Fair Election Legislation

Al and Diane Liebeskind [liebeskind@comcast.net]

Sent: Wednesday, February 10, 2016 10:29 PM**To:** CouncilMail**Cc:** Terrasa, Jen

February 10th, 2016

2016

Howard County Council Chairperson Calvin Ball,
Councilperson(s) "Jen" Terrasa, Mary Kay Sigaty,
Jon Weinstein, and Greg Fox,

I am writing this message to ask that you support
and vote in favor of Citizen Funded Campaigns in
Howard County.

Thank you.

Al Liebeskind

on Feb 10, 2016, at 2:15 PM, Terrasa, Jen wrote:

Good evening,

I'm writing to you because I thought you would be interested in an upcoming hearing on February 16th campaign finance reform legislation that Councilman Weinstein and I introduced earlier this month. As you know, I agree something needs to be done to "give power back to the people" and reduce the opportunities for a select few large donors to influence the process. That is why Councilman Weinstein and I filed CR27-2016, to establish a small donor incentive system for county races. If passed by the Council, Howard County voters will vote to authorize "citizen funded campaigns" through a ballot initiative in November.

In a fair elections system, candidates for County Council and County Executive who choose to participate agree not to accept large or corporate contributions and will receive limited matching funds for small contributions from individuals. The small contributions combined with the matching funds will help level the financial playing field for all candidates. Candidates who choose to participate must qualify for the program by showing strong support from individual donors.

A public hearing on this legislation is scheduled for February 16th at 7pm in the Banneker Room of the George Howard Building, 3430 Courthouse Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043. If you would like testify in person, use the [electronic sign-up](#); or, as always, you can visit the Council's home page and click on "Testify" button in the top right corner of the page. You can also sign-up in person starting an hour before the hearing. As a reminder for those

of you who can't join us in person, the sessions will be televised on GTv. In addition, you can watch the session live or at your convenience online at [Watch Us](#).

Additional written comments are always welcome. You can send your comments to me directly at jterrasa@howardcountymd.gov or to the entire Council at councilmail@howardcountymd.gov. You can also reach me or my assistant, Kate McLeod, at (410) 313-3108.

Thank you again for sharing your thoughts with me on campaign finance reform.

All the best,

Jen

Jennifer Terrasa
Councilwoman
Howard County Council, District 3
(410) 313-2001 jterrasa@howardcountymd.gov
"Like" my page on [Facebook](#) and follow me on [Twitter](#)!

Vote to Support Citizen Funded Campaigns in Howard County!

no-reply@howardcountymd.gov

Sent: Tuesday, February 09, 2016 7:39 PM

To: liebeskind@comcast.net

First Name: Al

Last Name: Liebeskind

Email: liebeskind@comcast.net

Street Address: 6878 Happy Heart Lane

City: Columbia

Subject: Vote to Support Citizen Funded Campaigns in Howard County!

Message: Howard County Council Chairperson Calvin Ball, Councilperson(s) "Jen" Terrasa, Mary Kay Sigaty, Jon Weinstein, and Greg Fox, I am writing this message to ask that you support and vote in favor of Citizen Funded Campaigns in Howard County. Thank you for your serious consideration of this important issue. Al Liebeskind