



League of Women Voters of Howard County  
5430 Vantage Point Road, Suite C  
Columbia, MD 21044  
410-730-0142

Date: March 10, 2017

To: Howard County Council Representatives

Cc: Allan Kittleman, Howard County Executive

From: League of Women Voters of Howard County

Re: Council Bill 30-2017

I am Linda Wengel speaking for the League of Women Voters of Howard County, 5430 Vantage Point Road, Columbia, in support of Council Bill 30-2017.

The League of Women Voters of the United States has long supported public financing of elections, either voluntary or mandatory in which candidates must abide by reasonable spending limits. Such funding is a step toward achieving the League's goals to enhance political equality for all citizens, protect representative democracy from being distorted by big spending in election campaigns, enable candidates to compete equitably for public office and have sufficient funds to communicate their messages to the public. Passing CB 30 presents Howard County citizens with the opportunity to move toward fairer local elections.

The League also supports strict enforcement of campaign finance laws to ensure that regulatory agencies are properly funded, staffed, and structured to avoid partisan deadlock in the decision making process. CB 30 provides for a seven person commission selected by each of the Council members and the County Executive to be confirmed by the entire Council and staffed by the Director of Finance or a designee. The League of Women Voters of Howard County recommends that a full time staff person be designated during the election cycle to assure maximum oversight of the process.

We urge passage of this legislation with consideration of our recommendation.