

FAIR ELECTION FUND COMMISSION

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January 6, 2026

The Honorable Aisha N. Braveboy
County Executive
1301 McCormick Drive
Largo, MD 20774

Re: FY 2027 Budget Recommendation for Fair Election Fund

Dear County Executive Braveboy:

I write on behalf of the County's Fair Election Fund Commission with our recommendation to include \$600,000 for this program in the County's fiscal year 2027 budget. Providing this annual appropriation recommendation is one of the primary duties of the Commission as set forth in the law establishing the County's matching campaign fund program.

It is important to increase the budget appropriation from the FY 2026 amount of \$400,000 for two reasons:

1. There will most certainly be far more candidates using the County's matching fund program in the 2030 election cycle than in 2026, the initial election year for the program, and
2. While funds are only disbursed over a one-year period every four years, establishing an annual funding practice is, to us, both fiscally prudent and an important statement about the value of the program and the County's fundamental commitment to election access and fairness.

While this Fund has a total of approximately \$800,000 available for qualifying candidates in 2026, an amount generated by two \$400,000 appropriations, there are special circumstances that lead us to be confident that this limited amount is sufficient at this time. The demand for funds in 2026 is less than anticipated when our Commission was established. Eligibility to the Fund was restricted by Council action for anyone with an active conventional campaign account during the two years prior to the 2026 election. And the special elections of 2024 and 2025 resulted in a large number of candidates, all running conventionally funded campaigns, being disqualified from using public matching funds in 2026.

Fair Election Fund Commission

c/o Office of Finance, Prince George's County Government
1301 McCormick Drive, Suite 1100, Largo, MD 20774

<https://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/boards-commissions/fair-election-fund-commission>

With such conditions unlikely to be at play in 2030, it is important to prepare for more candidates qualifying for public funds, including potentially multiple candidates for the County-wide positions eligible for far greater disbursements than the \$75,000 limit for district council candidates.

In addition to making an annual budget recommendation, our Commission is also charged with reviewing the program following each election and making recommendations to adjust funding levels for eligible campaigns in future years. This recommendation will factor in inflation and the changing costs of campaigns. While that recommendation will not be completed for another year, we expect our annual budget recommendation to be greater than \$600,000, potentially \$800,000 per year.

The uncertainty at this point of the amount needed in 2030, and the difficult budget year we face, has us limit this year's request to \$600,000, an amount that also includes funds necessary to reimburse the state Board of Elections for administrative services they provide.

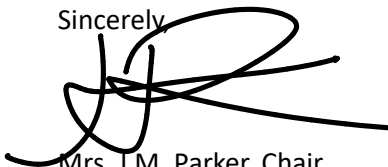
We find it helpful to regularly remind ourselves and others of the Fund's purpose: The Prince George's County's Fair Election Fund is a public campaign financing program established to promote and encourage broader access to elected office in the County and prevent large donations from unduly influencing government. The program is intended to empower citizens to run for office based on the strength of their ideas, supported by small donations from ordinary people and matching funds from the Fair Election Fund.

For many Prince Georgians, the only thing more concerning than deepening revenue shortfalls at the County and State levels is the growing threat to democracy posed by undue political influence from individuals and corporations with unprecedented wealth. Now more than ever, it is essential to uphold the democratic values that this program was designed to protect.

Thank you for your consideration of this most serious and heartfelt request. We welcome the opportunity to provide further information to you and your staff, and to the Chair and members of the County Council.

Thank you for your leadership and for working with us to ensure that sufficient funds are available to sustainably continue this important initiative for Prince George's County and its residents.

Sincerely



Mrs. J.M. Parker, Chair
Fair Election Fund Commission

CC: Ms. Angela Fair, Director, Office of Management and Budget
Ms. Linda Allen, Director, Office of Finance
Ms. Krystal Oriadha, Chair, County Council
Ms. Colette Gresham, Acting Administrator, County Council
County Council Members via the Acting Council Administrator