

Limits on Campaign Contributions

Patron: Delegate David Bulova, [HB874](#)

KEY PROVISIONS:

- This bill **limits contributions** from persons (including corporations), campaigns or any committees to candidates for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General or the General Assembly **to \$20,000 in any one election cycle for Senator and state-wide candidates and \$10,000 for Delegates**. In-kind contributions to the candidate are unlimited.
- It also restricts contributions to any “committee” to \$10,000 per calendar year, including political party committees, political, referendum, and inaugural committees.
- These limits **do not apply to contributions a candidate makes to their own campaign** but a provision for lifting contribution caps for candidates running against self-financed candidates is included. Thresholds for lifting the caps are \$400,000 for state-wide candidates and Senators and \$200,000 for Delegates. This is dropped in half for districts where median income is below the AMI as determined by the Census.
- **Any loan to a campaign not made by the candidate will be subject to the contribution limits.**
- Civil penalties for knowingly **accepting a contribution in excess of the limits shall be subject to penalties of up to two times the amount** by which the contribution exceeds the limits.
- **Contribution limits are indexed for inflation**, similar to federal caps.



WHY VIRGINIA NEEDS THIS BILL:

- **Virginia has NO dollar limits** on any type of campaign donations, unlike 45 other states.
- **The cost of our elections in Virginia rises exponentially every year** and [election costs in Virginia are among the highest in the country](#). In the 2023 election, money going to candidates exceeded \$188 million according to OpenSecrets data.
- **Lack of limits has marginalized the voices of Virginia’s small donors**; contributions of over \$10,000 in the 2023 election accounted for 85% of all Virginia contributions. The majority of donors contribute \$500 or less to candidates, accounting for only 3 percent of total contributions.
- **Virginia ranks poorly on campaign finance laws**. In 2020, the non-partisan [Coalition for Integrity](#) ranked **Virginia 46 out of 51 jurisdictions** for transparency and accountability
- **Legislators are forced to spend more and more time fundraising**, reducing their time dedicated to listening to and representing their constituents.
- Many well-established incumbents are protected by a reliable wealthy donor base and **the high cost of running for office precludes talented new candidates from running**, unless they have significant personal financial resources to invest in their own campaign.
- **The public’s confidence in government has eroded**. Virginians increasingly perceive that their legislators engage in “pay-to-play” politics and have failed to pass common sense campaign finance reform legislation year-after-year.



BIG MONEY OUT VA

“DEMOCRACY LOSES WHEN BIG MONEY WINS”

<https://www.bigmoneyoutva.org/>