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P.O. BOX 6486, ANNAPOLIS, MD 21401-0486 PHONE (410) 269-2840

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**TEXTING POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS REGULATIONS
APPROVED**

For Immediate Release

Contact: Jared DeMarinis
410.269.2853

Annapolis, Maryland (*March 29, 2012*)- Today, the State Board of Elections approved for final adoption new regulations authorizing political committee the option to receive contributions from text messaging or common short codes (CSCs). Maryland is one of the first states in the nation to approve of text messaging contributions.

The new regulations were in response to the legislation passed by the 2011 General Assembly (SB 757) allowing electronic contributions. The General Assembly required 3 elements be present before electronic contributions can occur. They are: 1. the identity of the person making the contribution shall be verified; 2. the transaction is secure; and 3. there is an adequate record of the transaction. The adopted regulations provide a political committee, the telecommunication carriers and wireless providers the necessary elements and structure to meet the standards of the law. The regulations state:

1. A record of the name and address of the person making the electronic contribution is provided to the receiving political committee;
2. The person making the electronic contribution approves and authorizes the contribution;
3. If a common short code contribution, the contribution amount is not greater than \$10.00 for each transaction;
4. The common short code is directly associated with the political committee receiving the contribution; and
5. The contributor receives a confirmation that the transaction occurred.

As technologies have advanced, different secure methods of disbursing funds have become available to the average citizen. Cell phone communications and texting have become commonplace in the United States as a method for increasing participation and awareness in an issue or cause. These regulations will open up new avenues for citizen involvement and participation in the political process.

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