

State report from Maryland, as presented on July 29, 2006.

The Maryland Green Party has 24 candidates running for office this year. This includes,

- 4 federal candidates (one for U.S. Senate, and 3 for the House of Representatives)
- Maryland state Governor, Lt. Governor, and Comptroller
- 12 candidates for Maryland State Assembly
- 4 candidates for County Councils
- 1 candidate for Judge (Baltimore City)

Maryland state law requires minor parties to collect 10,000 signatures every four years in order to maintain ballot access, so the Maryland Green Party is currently in the process of petitioning. Once we acquire ballot access, we can run a full slate of candidates without further petitioning. Assuming a 70% success rate on signatures, the Maryland Green Party plans to submit 14,000 signatures by election day in November. As of the date of this report, we have collected roughly 4,000 signatures (or 30% of our goal). Although we are a bit behind on petitioning, things are picking up, and so Maryland is optimistic that we will meet the requirement for ballot access.

The Maryland Green party developed an active legislative agenda this year, and lobbied the State Assembly for passage of several important bills. Our top two lobbying priorities were the Healthy Air Act and the Paper Ballot Trail for Electronic Voting Machines. The Healthy Air Act targeted emissions from coal-fired power plants in Maryland, and the Maryland Green Party was a key player in a grassroots coalition of environmental and citizen activist groups that fought for the passage of this legislation, including providing testimony on behalf of the bill to the State Assembly. The bill passed the state assembly despite strong opposition from the Governor and the power companies, and state politicians have told us that the bill only passed because of the strong grassroots movement behind it. Unfortunately, we were less successful with the Paper Ballot bill, which died in committee before reaching the floor of the State Assembly. The Paper Ballot Trail did have widespread support in the Assembly, but was unfortunately blocked by two Assembly members for political reasons. Other bills and programs that the Maryland Green Party actively supported this year include:

- The Fair Share Healthcare Act (also known as the Wal-Mart Bill)
- The Living Wage Bill (which provided a \$1/hr increase on minimum wage)
- The Medical Decision Making Act (which allows for same-sex partners to make medical decisions for each other)
- Full funding of Program Open Space.
- A Moratorium on the Death Penalty