
By: **Chairman, Judiciary Committee (Departmental - State Police, Dept. of)**
and Delegates Hutchins, Genn, Montague, O'Donnell, Bissett, Jacobs,
Doory, M. Burns, Comeau, Petzold, Harkins, Hubbard, Malone, Owings,
Preis, Rudolph, and DeCarlo

Introduced and read first time: February 13, 1998
Assigned to: Judiciary

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Homicide - Penalties**

3 FOR the purpose of adding principals in the second degree to be explicitly eligible for
4 the death penalty in cases involving a defendant convicted of the first degree
5 murder of a law enforcement officer; adding principals in the second degree to be
6 explicitly eligible for the death penalty in cases involving a defendant convicted
7 of first degree murder involving murder for hire; and generally relating to
8 aggravating circumstances to be considered upon a finding of guilt of first
9 degree murder.

10 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
11 Article 27 - Crimes and Punishments
12 Section 413
13 Annotated Code of Maryland
14 (1996 Replacement Volume and 1997 Supplement)

15 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
16 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

17 **Article 27 - Crimes and Punishments**

18 413.

19 (a) If a person is found guilty of murder in the first degree, and if the State
20 had given the notice required under § 412(b), a separate sentencing proceeding shall
21 be conducted as soon as practicable after the trial has been completed to determine
22 whether he shall be sentenced to death.

23 (b) This proceeding shall be conducted:

24 (1) Before the jury that determined the defendant's guilt; or

25 (2) Before a jury impaneled for the purpose of the proceeding if:

- 1 (i) The defendant was convicted upon a plea of guilty;
- 2 (ii) The defendant was convicted after a trial before the court
3 sitting without a jury;
- 4 (iii) The jury that determined the defendant's guilt has been
5 discharged by the court for good cause; or
- 6 (iv) Review of the original sentence of death by a court of competent
7 jurisdiction has resulted in a remand for resentencing; or
- 8 (3) Before the court alone, if a jury sentencing proceeding is waived by
9 the defendant.
- 10 (c) (1) The following type of evidence is admissible in this proceeding:
- 11 (i) Evidence relating to any mitigating circumstance listed in
12 subsection (g) of this section;
- 13 (ii) Evidence relating to any aggravating circumstance listed in
14 subsection (d) of this section of which the State had notified the defendant pursuant
15 to § 412(b) of this article;
- 16 (iii) Evidence of any prior criminal convictions, pleas of guilty or
17 nolo contendere, or the absence of such prior convictions or pleas, to the same extent
18 admissible in other sentencing procedures;
- 19 (iv) Any presentence investigation report. However, any
20 recommendation as to sentence contained in the report is not admissible; and
- 21 (v) Any other evidence that the court deems of probative value and
22 relevant to sentence, provided the defendant is accorded a fair opportunity to rebut
23 any statements.
- 24 (2) The State and the defendant or his counsel may present argument for
25 or against the sentence of death.
- 26 (3) After presentation of the evidence in a proceeding before a jury, in
27 addition to any other appropriate instructions permitted by law, the court shall
28 instruct the jury as to the findings it must make in order to determine whether the
29 sentence shall be death, imprisonment for life without the possibility of parole, or
30 imprisonment for life, and the burden of proof applicable to these findings in
31 accordance with subsection (f) or subsection (h) of this section.
- 32 (d) In determining the sentence, the court or jury, as the case may be, shall
33 first consider whether, beyond a reasonable doubt, any of the following aggravating
34 circumstances exist:

1 (1) [The victim was] ONE OR MORE PERSONS COMMITTED THE MURDER
2 OF a law enforcement officer [who was murdered] while in the performance of his
3 duties;

4 (2) The defendant committed the murder at a time when he was confined
5 in any correctional institution;

6 (3) The defendant committed the murder in furtherance of an escape or
7 an attempt to escape from or evade the lawful custody, arrest, or detention of or by an
8 officer or guard of a correctional institution or by a law enforcement officer;

9 (4) The victim was taken or attempted to be taken in the course of a
10 kidnapping or abduction or an attempt to kidnap or abduct;

11 (5) The victim was a child abducted in violation of § 2 of this article;

12 (6) The defendant committed the murder pursuant to an agreement or
13 contract for remuneration or the promise of remuneration to commit the murder;

14 (7) The defendant engaged or employed another person to commit the
15 murder and the murder was committed pursuant to an agreement or contract for
16 remuneration or the promise of remuneration;

17 (8) At the time of the murder, the defendant was under sentence of death
18 or imprisonment for life;

19 (9) The defendant committed more than one offense of murder in the
20 first degree arising out of the same incident; or

21 (10) The defendant committed the murder while committing or
22 attempting to commit a carjacking, armed carjacking, robbery, arson in the first
23 degree, rape or sexual offense in the first degree.

24 (e) As used in this section, the following terms have the meanings indicated
25 unless a contrary meaning is clearly intended from the context in which the term
26 appears:

27 [(1) The terms "defendant" and "person", except as those terms appear in
28 subsection (d)(7) of this section, include only a principal in the first degree.]

29 (1) (I) THE TERMS "DEFENDANT" AND "PERSON", EXCEPT AS THOSE
30 TERMS APPEAR IN SUBSECTION (D)(1) AND (7) OF THIS SECTION, INCLUDE ONLY A
31 PRINCIPAL IN THE FIRST DEGREE.

32 (II) IN SUBSECTION (D)(1) OF THIS SECTION, THE TERM PERSON
33 INCLUDES A PRINCIPAL IN THE FIRST DEGREE OR A PRINCIPAL IN THE SECOND
34 DEGREE WHO EXHIBITED A RECKLESS DISREGARD FOR HUMAN LIFE.

35 (2) The term "correctional institution" includes any institution for the
36 detention or confinement of persons charged with or convicted of a crime, including

1 Patuxent Institution, any institution for the detention or confinement of juveniles
2 charged with or adjudicated as being delinquent, and any hospital in which the
3 person was confined pursuant to an order of a court exercising criminal jurisdiction.

4 (3) (i) The term "law enforcement officer" has the meaning given in §
5 727 of [Article 27] THIS ARTICLE.

6 (ii) The term "law enforcement officer", as used in subsection (d) of
7 this section, includes:

8 1. An officer serving in a probationary status;

9 2. A parole and probation officer;

10 3. A law enforcement officer of a jurisdiction outside of
11 Maryland; and

12 4. If the law enforcement officer is wearing the uniform worn
13 by the law enforcement officer while acting in an official capacity or is prominently
14 displaying his official badge or other insignia of office, a law enforcement officer
15 privately employed as a security officer or special policeman under the provisions of
16 Article 41, §§ 4-901 through 4-913 of the Code.

17 (4) "Imprisonment for life without the possibility of parole" means
18 imprisonment for the natural life of an inmate under the custody of a correctional
19 institution, including the Patuxent Institution.

20 (f) If the court or jury does not find, beyond a reasonable doubt, that one or
21 more of these aggravating circumstances exist, it shall state that conclusion in
22 writing, and a sentence of death may not be imposed.

23 (g) If the court or jury finds, beyond a reasonable doubt, that one or more of
24 these aggravating circumstances exist, it shall then consider whether, based upon a
25 preponderance of the evidence, any of the following mitigating circumstances exist:

26 (1) The defendant has not previously (i) been found guilty of a crime of
27 violence; (ii) entered a plea of guilty or nolo contendere to a charge of a crime of
28 violence; or (iii) had a judgment of probation on stay of entry of judgment entered on
29 a charge of a crime of violence. As used in this paragraph, "crime of violence" means
30 abduction, arson in the first degree, escape, kidnapping, manslaughter, except
31 involuntary manslaughter, mayhem, murder, robbery, carjacking or armed
32 carjacking, or rape or sexual offense in the first or second degree, or an attempt to
33 commit any of these offenses, or the use of a handgun in the commission of a felony or
34 another crime of violence.

35 (2) The victim was a participant in the defendant's conduct or consented
36 to the act which caused the victim's death.

1 (3) The defendant acted under substantial duress, domination or
2 provocation of another person, but not so substantial as to constitute a complete
3 defense to the prosecution.

4 (4) The murder was committed while the capacity of the defendant to
5 appreciate the criminality of his conduct or to conform his conduct to the
6 requirements of law was substantially impaired as a result of mental incapacity,
7 mental disorder or emotional disturbance.

8 (5) The youthful age of the defendant at the time of the crime.

9 (6) The act of the defendant was not the sole proximate cause of the
10 victim's death.

11 (7) It is unlikely that the defendant will engage in further criminal
12 activity that would constitute a continuing threat to society.

13 (8) Any other facts which the jury or the court specifically sets forth in
14 writing that it finds as mitigating circumstances in the case.

15 (h) (1) If the court or jury finds that one or more of these mitigating
16 circumstances exist, it shall determine whether, by a preponderance of the evidence,
17 the aggravating circumstances outweigh the mitigating circumstances.

18 (2) If it finds that the aggravating circumstances outweigh the
19 mitigating circumstances, the sentence shall be death.

20 (3) If it finds that the aggravating circumstances do not outweigh the
21 mitigating circumstances, a sentence of death may not be imposed.

22 (i) The determination of the court or jury shall be in writing, and, if a jury,
23 shall be unanimous and shall be signed by the foreman.

24 (j) The determination of the court or jury shall state, specifically:

25 (1) Which, if any, aggravating circumstances it finds to exist;

26 (2) Which, if any, mitigating circumstances it finds to exist;

27 (3) Whether any aggravating circumstances found under subsection (d)
28 of this section outweigh the mitigating circumstances found under subsection (g) of
29 this section;

30 (4) Whether the aggravating circumstances found under subsection (d)
31 do not outweigh mitigating circumstances under subsection (g); and

32 (5) The sentence, determined in accordance with subsection (f) or (h).

33 (k) (1) If the jury determines that a sentence of death shall be imposed
34 under the provisions of this section, then the court shall impose a sentence of death.

1 (2) If the jury, within a reasonable time, is not able to agree as to
2 whether a sentence of death shall be imposed, the court may not impose a sentence of
3 death.

4 (3) If the sentencing proceeding is conducted before a court without a
5 jury, the court shall determine whether a sentence of death shall be imposed under
6 the provisions of this section.

7 (4) If the court or jury determines that a sentence of death may not be
8 imposed, and the State did not give the notice required under § 412(b) of this article
9 of intention to seek a sentence of life imprisonment without the possibility of parole,
10 the court shall impose a sentence of life imprisonment.

11 (5) If the State gives the notice required under § 412(b) of this article of
12 intention to seek a sentence of imprisonment for life without the possibility of parole
13 but does not give notice of intention to seek the death penalty, the court shall conduct
14 a separate sentencing proceeding as soon as practicable after the trial has been
15 completed to determine whether to impose a sentence of imprisonment for life or
16 imprisonment for life without the possibility of parole.

17 (6) If the State gives the notice required under § 412(b) of this article of
18 intention to seek the death penalty in addition to the notice of intention to seek a
19 sentence of imprisonment for life without the possibility of parole, and the court or
20 jury determines that a sentence of death may not be imposed under the provisions of
21 this section, that court or jury shall determine whether to impose a sentence of
22 imprisonment for life or imprisonment for life without the possibility of parole.

23 (7) (i) In determining whether to impose a sentence of imprisonment
24 for life without the possibility of parole, a jury shall agree unanimously on the
25 imposition of a sentence of imprisonment for life without the possibility of parole.

26 (ii) If the jury agrees unanimously to impose a sentence of
27 imprisonment for life without the possibility of parole, the court shall impose a
28 sentence of imprisonment for life without the possibility of parole.

29 (iii) If the jury, within a reasonable time, is not able to agree
30 unanimously on the imposition of a sentence of imprisonment for life without the
31 possibility of parole, the court shall dismiss the jury and impose a sentence of
32 imprisonment for life.

33 (8) If the State gives the notice required under § 412 of this article of the
34 State's intention to seek a sentence of imprisonment for life without the possibility of
35 parole, the court shall conduct a separate sentencing proceeding as soon as
36 practicable after the trial has been completed to determine whether to impose a
37 sentence of imprisonment for life or imprisonment for life without the possibility of
38 parole.

39 (1) The Court of Appeals may adopt rules of procedure to govern the conduct of
40 a sentencing proceeding conducted pursuant to this section, including any forms to be

1 used by the court or jury in making its written findings and determinations of
2 sentence.

3 (m) (1) A judge shall appoint at least 2 alternate jurors when impaneling a
4 jury for any proceeding:

5 (i) In which the defendant is being tried for a crime for which the
6 death penalty may be imposed; or

7 (ii) Which is held under the provisions of this section.

8 (2) The alternate jurors shall be retained during the length of the
9 proceedings under such restrictions and regulations as the judge may impose.

10 (3) (i) If any juror dies, becomes incapacitated, or disqualified, or is
11 discharged for any other reason before the jury begins its deliberations on sentencing,
12 an alternate juror becomes a juror in the order in which selected, and serves in all
13 respects as those selected on the regular trial panel.

14 (ii) An alternate juror may not replace a juror who is discharged
15 during the actual deliberations of the jury on the guilt or innocence of the defendant,
16 or on the issue of sentencing.

17 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall be
18 construed only prospectively to apply to offenses that are committed after October 1,
19 1998, and may not be applied or interpreted to have any effect on or application to
20 offenses committed before October 1, 1998.

21 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take
22 effect October 1, 1998.