

SENATE BILL 391

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1998 Regular Session  
8r1251  
CF 8r1252

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By: **Senators Stone, Kelley, and Middlebrooks (Committee to Revise Article 27)**

Introduced and read first time: February 6, 1998

Assigned to: Judicial Proceedings

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A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Crimes - Trespass - Revision**

3 FOR the purpose of revising, restating, and recodifying the laws concerning trespass;  
4 eliminating a requirement that certain trespass prosecution be brought by a  
5 certain landowner or tenant; altering certain provisions concerning suspension  
6 of hunting and fishing licenses for certain trespass offenses; repealing a  
7 requirement that certain paint marks be made and placed in a certain manner;  
8 eliminating a provision concerning certain discriminatory practices; prohibiting  
9 wanton trespass on the property of Government House; eliminating a certain  
10 exception for lawful business concerning trespass on Government House;  
11 altering certain penalties; defining certain terms; making stylistic changes;  
12 providing that the Committee Notes contained in this Act are not law; and  
13 generally relating to trespass and entry on property.

14 BY repealing

15 Article 27 - Crimes and Punishments  
16 Section 576, 576A, 577, 577C, 578, 579A, 579B, and 580  
17 Annotated Code of Maryland  
18 (1996 Replacement Volume and 1997 Supplement)

19 BY adding to

20 Article 27 - Crimes and Punishments  
21 Section 576 and 577  
22 Annotated Code of Maryland  
23 (1996 Replacement Volume and 1997 Supplement)

24 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

25 Article 27 - Crimes and Punishments  
26 Section 577A  
27 Annotated Code of Maryland  
28 (1996 Replacement Volume and 1997 Supplement)

1 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
2 Article - Natural Resources  
3 Section 4-1207  
4 Annotated Code of Maryland  
5 (1997 Replacement Volume and 1997 Supplement)

6 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
7 Article - Natural Resources  
8 Section 10-1108  
9 Annotated Code of Maryland  
10 (1990 Replacement Volume and 1997 Supplement)

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

13 **Article 27 - Crimes and Punishments**

14 [576.

15 Any person who enters or trespasses on any property which is posted against  
16 trespassers in a conspicuous manner or in accordance with the provisions of § 576A of  
17 this subheading is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to a fine not  
18 exceeding \$500, or imprisonment not exceeding three months, or both. The  
19 prosecution of such offenders shall be made and proceedings instituted by the  
20 landowner or tenant of the property unlawfully entered. Any person who is convicted  
21 of violating the provisions of this section and who carried any firearm or bow and  
22 arrow at the time of the violation shall have the person's hunting license revoked for  
23 one year immediately on conviction. Any person who is convicted of violating the  
24 provisions of this section and was carrying a fishing rod or net at the time of the  
25 violation shall have any fishing license revoked for one year immediately on  
26 conviction. If the person does not hold a license, the person may not be issued the  
27 appropriate license until one year after any conviction under the provisions of this  
28 section.]

29 [576A.

30 (a) In order to institute proceedings for trespassing under § 576 of this  
31 subheading, the owner or tenant of any private property shall have posted the  
32 property against unlawful entry or trespass by placing:

33 (1) Signs where they may reasonably be seen; or

34 (2) Identifying paint marks on trees or posts at each road entrance and  
35 adjacent to public roadways, public waterways, and any other lands adjoining the  
36 property.

37 (b) A paint mark under subsection (a)(2) of this section shall:

1 (1) Be a vertical line at least two inches in width and at least eight  
2 inches in length;

3 (2) Be centered at least three feet but no more than six feet from the  
4 ground or from the water surface at its mean high tide for tidal water or its normal  
5 level for nontidal water; and

6 (3) Be readily visible to any person with normal eyesight who  
7 approaches the property.

8 (c) The Department of Natural Resources shall adopt regulations that  
9 prescribe the type and color of paint to be used for posting property under this  
10 section.]

11 [577.

12 (a) (1) Any person who remains upon, enters upon or crosses over the land,  
13 premises or private property, including boarding any boat or other marine vessel, of  
14 any person or persons in this State after having been duly notified by the owner or his  
15 agent not to do so is considered guilty of a misdemeanor, and on conviction is subject  
16 to a fine not exceeding \$500, or imprisonment not exceeding 3 months, or both.

17 (2) The provisions of paragraph (1) of this subsection shall apply to  
18 property used as a housing project and operated by a housing authority or by another  
19 State public body, as those terms are defined under Article 44A of the Code, if a duly  
20 authorized agent of the housing authority or other State public body gives the  
21 required notification specified in paragraph (1) of this subsection.

22 (3) This section may not be construed to include within its provisions the  
23 entry upon or crossing over any land when such entry or crossing is done under a  
24 bona fide claim of right or ownership of said land, it being the intention of this section  
25 only to prohibit any wanton trespass upon the private land of others.

26 (b) These provisions do not preclude the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore  
27 from enacting legislation making it unlawful or prohibitory to refuse, withhold from,  
28 or deny to any person because of his race, creed, color, sex, age, physical or mental  
29 handicap, or national origin any accommodations, advantages, facilities or privileges  
30 of any place or places whose facilities, accommodations, services, commodities or use  
31 are offered to or enjoyed by the general public, either with or without charge.]

32 576.

33 (A) IN THIS SUBHEADING THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS  
34 INDICATED.

35 (B) "CULTIVATED LAND" MEANS LAND WHICH HAS BEEN CLEARED OF ITS  
36 NATURAL VEGETATION AND IS PRESENTLY PLANTED WITH A CROP OR ORCHARD.

37 (C) (1) "OFF-ROAD VEHICLE" MEANS:

1 (I) A VEHICLE AS DEFINED IN § 11-176 OF THE TRANSPORTATION  
2 ARTICLE; OR

3 (II) ANY MOTORIZED VEHICLE DESIGNED FOR OR CAPABLE OF  
4 CROSS-COUNTRY TRAVEL ON OR IMMEDIATELY OVER LAND, WATER, SNOW, ICE,  
5 MARSH, SWAMPLAND, OR OTHER NATURAL TERRAIN AND INCLUDES, BUT IS NOT  
6 LIMITED TO, FOUR-WHEEL DRIVE OR LOW-PRESSURE-TIRE VEHICLES,  
7 MOTORCYCLES, AND RELATED TWO-WHEEL VEHICLES, AMPHIBIOUS MACHINES,  
8 GROUND-EFFECT VEHICLES, OR AIR-CUSHION VEHICLES.

9 (2) "OFF-ROAD VEHICLE" DOES NOT INCLUDE ANY BOAT, MILITARY,  
10 FIRE OR LAW ENFORCEMENT VEHICLES, FARM-TYPE TRACTORS AND OTHER  
11 AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT USED FOR AGRICULTURAL PURPOSES OR EARTH  
12 MOVING, OR CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT WHILE USED FOR THOSE PURPOSES, LAWN  
13 MOWERS, SNOWBLOWERS, GARDEN OR LAWN TRACTORS, OR GOLF CARTS WHILE  
14 BEING USED FOR THEIR DESIGNED PURPOSE.

15 (D) "WANTON" RETAINS ITS JUDICIALLY DETERMINED MEANING.

16 COMMITTEE NOTE (COMMITTEE TO REVISE ARTICLE 27): The definitions of  
17 "cultivated land" and "off-road vehicle" are based on current law found in former §§  
18 578 and 579B of Article 27, respectively. No substantive changes are intended.

19 "Wanton" has been defined as being "characterized by extreme recklessness and  
20 utter disregard for the rights of others". See, e.g., *Griffin v. State*, 225 Md. 422, 171  
21 A.2d 717 (1961).

22 577.

23 (A) (1) A PERSON MAY NOT ENTER OR TRESPASS ON ANY PRIVATE  
24 PROPERTY WHICH IN A CONSPICUOUS MANNER IS POSTED AGAINST TRESPASSERS  
25 BY:

26 (I) SIGNS WHERE THEY MAY REASONABLY BE SEEN; OR

27 (II) IDENTIFYING PAINT MARKS THAT CONFORM WITH  
28 REGULATIONS ADOPTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ARE  
29 MADE ON TREES OR POSTS AT EACH ROAD ENTRANCE AND ADJACENT TO PUBLIC  
30 ROADWAYS, PUBLIC WATERWAYS, AND ANY OTHER LAND ADJOINING THE PROPERTY.

31 (2) (I) A PERSON MAY NOT REMAIN ON, ENTER ON, OR CROSS OVER  
32 THE LAND, PREMISES, OR PRIVATE PROPERTY, INCLUDING BOARDING ANY BOAT OR  
33 OTHER MARINE VESSEL OF ANOTHER, AFTER HAVING BEEN DULY NOTIFIED BY THE  
34 OWNER OR THE OWNER'S AGENT NOT TO DO SO.

35 (II) THE PROVISIONS OF SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH  
36 SHALL APPLY TO PROPERTY USED AS A HOUSING PROJECT AND OPERATED BY A  
37 HOUSING AUTHORITY OR BY ANOTHER STATE PUBLIC BODY, AS THOSE TERMS ARE  
38 DEFINED UNDER ARTICLE 44A OF THE CODE, IF A DULY AUTHORIZED AGENT OF THE

1 HOUSING AUTHORITY OR OTHER STATE PUBLIC BODY GIVES THE REQUIRED  
2 NOTIFICATION SPECIFIED IN SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH.

3 (III) IT IS INTENDED THAT THIS PARAGRAPH IS ONLY TO PROHIBIT  
4 ANY WANTON ENTRY AND MAY NOT BE CONSTRUED TO APPLY TO THE ENTRY ON OR  
5 CROSSING OVER ANY LAND WHEN THE ENTRY OR CROSSING IS DONE UNDER A BONA  
6 FIDE CLAIM OF RIGHT OR OWNERSHIP.

7 (3) EXCEPT WHEN TRAVELING ON CLEARLY DESIGNATED PRIVATE  
8 DRIVEWAYS, A PERSON MAY NOT OPERATE OR USE AN OFF-ROAD VEHICLE ON  
9 PRIVATE PROPERTY UNLESS THE PERSON HAS IN THE PERSON'S POSSESSION THE  
10 WRITTEN PERMISSION OF THE OWNER OR TENANT OF THE PROPERTY.

11 (4) EXCEPT AS PERMITTED BY LAW, A PERSON MAY NOT OPERATE OR  
12 USE AN OFF-ROAD VEHICLE ON PROPERTY OWNED OR LEASED BY THE STATE OR  
13 ANY POLITICAL SUBDIVISION INCLUDING:

14 (I) A COUNTY;

15 (II) A MUNICIPAL CORPORATION;

16 (III) A BICOUNTY OR MULTICOUNTY AGENCY;

17 (IV) A COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION;

18 (V) A PUBLIC AUTHORITY; OR

19 (VI) A SPECIAL TAXING DISTRICT.

20 (5) (I) UNLESS A PERSON HAS PERMISSION FROM THE OWNER OR  
21 AGENT OF THE OWNER, A PERSON MAY NOT ENTER ON THE CULTIVATED LAND OF  
22 ANOTHER.

23 (II) IT IS INTENDED THAT THIS PARAGRAPH IS ONLY TO PROHIBIT  
24 WANTON ENTRY ON CULTIVATED LAND, AND MAY NOT BE CONSTRUED TO:

25 1. PREVENT PERSONS WHO RESIDE ON CULTIVATED LAND  
26 FROM RECEIVING ANY PERSON WHO SEEKS TO PROVIDE A LAWFUL SERVICE; OR

27 2. APPLY TO PERSONS ENTERING CULTIVATED LAND UNDER  
28 COLOR OF LAW OR COLOR OF TITLE.

29 (6) A PERSON MAY NOT ENTER OR REMAIN IN THE STABLE AREA OF A  
30 RACETRACK AFTER HAVING BEEN DULY NOTIFIED BY A RACETRACK OFFICIAL,  
31 SECURITY GUARD, OR LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER THAT THE PERSON IS NOT  
32 ALLOWED IN THAT AREA.

33 (7) A PERSON MAY NOT ENTER ON THE LAND OR PREMISES OF ANOTHER  
34 FOR THE PURPOSE OF INVADING THE PRIVACY OF THE OCCUPANTS OF ANY  
35 BUILDING OR ENCLOSURE LOCATED ON THE LAND OR PREMISES, BY LOOKING INTO  
36 ANY WINDOW, DOOR, OR OTHER APERTURE OF THE BUILDING OR ENCLOSURE.

1 (B) A PERSON WHO VIOLATES ANY PROVISION OF THIS SECTION IS GUILTY OF  
2 A MISDEMEANOR AND ON CONVICTION IS SUBJECT TO A FINE OF NOT MORE THAN  
3 \$500 OR IMPRISONMENT FOR NOT MORE THAN 90 DAYS OR BOTH.

4 COMMITTEE NOTE (COMMITTEE TO REVISE ARTICLE 27): This section  
5 includes those offenses previously found in former §§ 576, 577, 578, 579A, 579B, and  
6 580 of Article 27.

7 The previous requirement under former § 576 of Article 27 that the prosecution  
8 be brought by the landowner or tenant has been eliminated. The provisions dealing  
9 with suspension of a hunting or fishing license for a violation of former § 576 (new  
10 subsection (a)(1)) if the offense was committed while carrying a fishing rod, net,  
11 firearm, or bow and arrow can now be found in §§ 4-1207 (fishing license) and  
12 10-1108 (hunting license) of the Natural Resources Article.

13 The posting requirements previously found in former § 576A of Article 27 are  
14 included as part of subsection (a)(1) of this section.

15 See § 26-102 of the Education Article for prohibitions on trespass on grounds of  
16 a public institution of elementary, secondary, or higher education.

17 When any provision of this Trespass subheading is violated, a court should  
18 consider whether restitution should be ordered under the provisions of § 807 of this  
19 article.

20 [577A.] 578.

21 [(1)] (A) [Any person refusing or failing] A PERSON MAY NOT REFUSE OR FAIL  
22 to leave a public building or grounds, or specific portion [thereof, of a public agency or  
23 public institution] OF A PUBLIC BUILDING OR GROUNDS during those hours of the  
24 day or night when the building, grounds, or specific portion [thereof] OF THE PUBLIC  
25 BUILDING OR GROUNDS, is regularly closed to the public, upon being requested to do  
26 so by a regularly employed guard, watchman or other authorized employee of the  
27 public agency or institution owning, operating or maintaining the building or  
28 property, if the surrounding circumstances are such as to indicate to a reasonable  
29 [man] PERSON that such person has no apparent lawful business to pursue at such  
30 place[, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof shall be fined  
31 not more than \$1,000.00, or imprisoned for not more than six months, or both, in the  
32 discretion of the court].

33 [(2)] (B) [Any person refusing or failing] A PERSON MAY NOT REFUSE OR FAIL  
34 to leave a public building or grounds, or specific portion [thereof, of a public agency or  
35 public institution] OF A PUBLIC BUILDING OR GROUNDS during regular business  
36 hours, upon being requested to do so by an authorized employee of the public agency  
37 or institution owning, operating or maintaining the building or property, if the  
38 surrounding circumstances are such as to indicate to a reasonable [man] PERSON  
39 that [such] THE person has no apparent lawful business to pursue at such place or is  
40 acting in a manner disruptive of and disturbing to the conduct of normal business by  
41 such agency or institution[, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction

1 thereof shall be fined not more than \$1,000.00, or imprisoned for not more than six  
2 months, or both, in the discretion of the court].

3 (C) (1) A PERSON MAY NOT COMMIT WANTON TRESPASS ON THE PROPERTY  
4 OF GOVERNMENT HOUSE.

5 (2) NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER PROVISION OF LAW, THERE SHALL  
6 BE NO REQUIREMENT THAT THE PROPERTY OF GOVERNMENT HOUSE BE POSTED  
7 AGAINST UNLAWFUL ENTRY OR TRESPASS.

8 (D) A PERSON WHO VIOLATES THIS SECTION IS GUILTY OF A MISDEMEANOR  
9 AND ON CONVICTION IS SUBJECT TO A FINE OF NOT MORE THAN \$1,000 OR  
10 IMPRISONMENT FOR NOT MORE THAN 6 MONTHS OR BOTH.

11 COMMITTEE NOTE (COMMITTEE TO REVISE ARTICLE 27): Subsection (c)  
12 of this section prohibiting trespass on Government House is based on the prohibitions  
13 in former § 577C of Article 27. The requirement that the trespass be wanton  
14 eliminates the need for the lawful business exception found in former § 577C of  
15 Article 27.

16 The only other changes to this section are in style and no substantive change is  
17 intended.

18 [577C.

19 (a) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, any person who enters  
20 or trespasses upon the property of Government House is guilty of a misdemeanor and  
21 on conviction is subject to a fine not exceeding \$1,000 or imprisonment not exceeding  
22 6 months or both.

23 (b) This section does not apply to any person who has lawful business to  
24 pursue at Government House.

25 (c) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, there shall be no requirement  
26 that the property of Government House be posted against unlawful entry or  
27 trespass.]

28 [578.

29 (a) (1) "Off-road vehicle" means in this section, except as provided in  
30 paragraph (2) of this subsection:

31 (i) A vehicle as defined in § 11-176 of the Transportation Article; or

32 (ii) Any motorized vehicle designed for or capable of cross-country  
33 travel on or immediately over land, water, snow, ice, marsh, swampland or other  
34 natural terrain and includes, but is not limited to four-wheel drive or  
35 low-pressure-tire vehicles, motorcycles and related two-wheel vehicles, amphibious  
36 machines, ground-effect, or air-cushion vehicles.

1           (2)       "Off-road vehicle" does not include any boat, military, fire or  
2 law-enforcement vehicle, farm-type tractors and other agricultural equipment used  
3 for agricultural purposes or earth moving, or construction equipment while used for  
4 those purposes, lawn mowers, snowblowers, garden or lawn tractors or golf carts  
5 while being used for their designed purpose.

6       (b)       (1)       Except when traveling on clearly designated private driveways, a  
7 person may not operate or use an off-road vehicle on private property unless the  
8 person has in his possession the written permission of the owner or tenant of the  
9 property.

10           (2)       Except as permitted by law, a person may not operate or use an  
11 off-road vehicle on property owned or leased by the State or any other of its political  
12 subdivisions.

13           (3)       Any person who violates the provisions of this section is guilty of a  
14 misdemeanor and, on conviction, is subject to a fine not exceeding \$250.]

15 [579A.

16       Any unauthorized person who enters or remains in the stable area of a race  
17 track after having been notified by a race track official, security guard, or policeman  
18 that he is not allowed in that area is guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction  
19 thereof shall be subject to a fine of not more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00), or  
20 imprisonment for not more than six months, or both fine and imprisonment.]

21 [579B.

22       (a)       A person, without permission from the owner or agent of the owner, who  
23 enters upon the cultivated land of another is guilty of a misdemeanor and on  
24 conviction may be fined not more than \$500. "Cultivated land" means land which has  
25 been cleared of its natural vegetation and is presently planted with a crop or orchard.

26       (b)       It is intended that this section is only to prohibit any wanton entry upon  
27 cultivated land, and therefore this section shall not be construed:

28           (i)       To prevent persons who reside on cultivated land from receiving any  
29 person who seeks to provide a lawful service; or

30           (ii)       To apply to persons entering cultivated land under color of law or  
31 color of title.]

32 [580.

33       Any person who shall enter upon the land or premises of another for the purpose  
34 of invading the privacy of the occupants of any building or enclosure located thereon,  
35 by looking into any window, door or other aperture of such building or enclosure, shall  
36 be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction thereof shall be fined not more than  
37 fifty dollars or imprisoned for not more than thirty days, or both fined and  
38 imprisoned.]



**Article - Natural Resources**

1 4-1207.

2 (A) In addition to any other penalty or fine provided in this title, any person  
3 who is convicted of violating any provision of this title or any regulation adopted  
4 under the authority of this title may have the license under which the person  
5 operated in the commission of violation suspended or revoked by the court.

6 (B) (1) A COURT MAY SUSPEND FOR NOT MORE THAN 1 YEAR A FISHING  
7 LICENSE OF A PERSON WHO IS CONVICTED OF VIOLATING ARTICLE 27, § 577(A)(1) OF  
8 THE CODE WHILE CARRYING A FISHING ROD OR NET.

9 (2) WHEN A PERSON NOT HOLDING A FISHING LICENSE IS CONVICTED  
10 OF VIOLATING ARTICLE 27, § 577(A)(1) OF THE CODE WHILE CARRYING A FISHING ROD  
11 OR NET, THE COURT MAY ORDER THAT THE PERSON NOT OBTAIN A FISHING LICENSE  
12 FOR A PERIOD OF NOT MORE THAN 1 YEAR.

13 COMMITTEE NOTE (COMMITTEE TO REVISE ARTICLE 27): The provisions  
14 in subsection (b) of this section on suspension of a fishing license for violating the  
15 trespass law (former Article 27, § 577(a)(1)) are based on current law. The Committee  
16 felt that the Natural Resources Article was the more appropriate place for the license  
17 suspension provisions.

18 10-1108.

19 (a) (1) In addition to any other penalty, a court may suspend the hunting  
20 license of any person who is convicted of violating any provision of this title or any  
21 regulation adopted under this title, for a period not exceeding 5 years.

22 (2) (I) A COURT MAY SUSPEND FOR NOT MORE THAN 1 YEAR THE  
23 HUNTING LICENSE OF A PERSON WHO IS CONVICTED OF VIOLATING ARTICLE 27, §  
24 577(A)(1) OF THE CODE WHILE CARRYING A FIREARM OR BOW AND ARROW.

25 (II) WHEN A PERSON NOT HOLDING A HUNTING LICENSE IS  
26 CONVICTED OF VIOLATING ARTICLE 27, § 577(A)(1) OF THE CODE WHILE CARRYING A  
27 FIREARM OR BOW AND ARROW, THE COURT MAY ORDER THAT THE PERSON NOT  
28 OBTAIN A HUNTING LICENSE FOR A PERIOD OF NOT MORE THAN 1 YEAR.

29 (b) If a person whose hunting license is suspended under this section passes  
30 another hunting safety course after the suspension has expired, the person may  
31 reapply for and be issued a hunting license.

32 (c) A person whose hunting license is suspended under this section may not:

33 (1) Hunt on any lands where a hunting license is required; or

34 (2) Purchase or attempt to purchase another hunting license during the  
35 period of suspension.

1 COMMITTEE NOTE (COMMITTEE TO REVISE ARTICLE 27): The provisions  
2 in subsection (a)(2) of this section on suspension of a hunting license for violating the  
3 trespass law (former Article 27, § 577(a)(1)) are based on current law. The Committee  
4 felt that the Natural Resources Article was the more appropriate place for the license  
5 suspension provisions.

6 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Committee Notes  
7 contained in this Act are not law.

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