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By: **Delegate Heller (Joint Committee on the Management of Public Funds)**  
**and Delegates Aumann, Bohanan, and Marriott**

Introduced and read first time: January 27, 2006

Assigned to: Ways and Means

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Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

House action: Adopted

Read second time: March 7, 2006

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CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Revenue Collection - Offsets**

3 FOR the purpose of authorizing the Comptroller under certain circumstances to  
4 withhold certain tax refunds and other payments owed by the State to certain  
5 persons and to pay certain amounts to an agency of the federal government that  
6 has certified delinquent nontax liabilities of certain persons; providing for  
7 certain procedures relating to certain certifications and withholding of certain  
8 tax refunds and other payments owed by the State; authorizing certain  
9 disclosure of certain tax information under certain circumstances; defining  
10 certain terms; and generally relating to the withholding of State payments.

11 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
12 Article - Tax - General  
13 Section 13-203 and 13-918  
14 Annotated Code of Maryland  
15 (2004 Replacement Volume and 2005 Supplement)

16 BY adding to  
17 Article - Tax - General  
18 Section 13-930 through 13-932, inclusive, to be under the new part "Part VI.  
19 Federal Nontax Liabilities - Withholding of Tax Refunds and Payments"  
20 Annotated Code of Maryland  
21 (2004 Replacement Volume and 2005 Supplement)

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

1 **Article - Tax - General**

2 13-203.

3 (a) (1) In this subsection, "taxing official" means:

4 (i) a unit or official of another state whom the laws of that state  
5 charge with the imposition, assessment, or collection of state taxes;

6 (ii) an employee of the United States Treasury Department; or

7 (iii) a collector of United States taxes.

8 (2) The Comptroller or Department may disclose to a taxing official tax  
9 information that is contained in any tax report or return, audit of a tax return, or  
10 report of a tax investigation and relates to the imposition, assessment, and collection  
11 of taxes or to any other matter about taxation generally if:12 (i) the Comptroller or Department is satisfied that the tax  
13 information is to be used only for tax purposes;14 (ii) the taxing official's jurisdiction makes similar information  
15 available to the appropriate officials of this State; and16 (iii) in the case of another state, its laws provide for adequate  
17 confidentiality of Maryland tax returns or other information.18 (b) Tax information may be disclosed in accordance with a proper judicial  
19 order or a legislative order.

20 (c) Tax information may be disclosed to:

21 (1) an employee or officer of the State who, by reason of that employment  
22 or office, has the right to the tax information;

23 (2) another tax collector;

24 (3) the Maryland Tax Court;

25 (4) a legal representative of the State, to review the tax information  
26 about a taxpayer:

27 (i) who applies for review under this title;

28 (ii) who appeals from a determination under this title; or

29 (iii) against whom an action to recover tax or a penalty is pending or  
30 will be initiated under this title;31 (5) any license issuing authority of the State required by State law to  
32 verify through the Comptroller that an applicant has paid all undisputed taxes and

1 unemployment insurance contributions payable to the Comptroller or the Secretary of  
2 Labor, Licensing, and Regulation or that the applicant has provided for payment in a  
3 manner satisfactory to the unit responsible for collection; [and]

4 (6) a local official as defined in § 13-925 of this title to the extent  
5 necessary to administer Subtitle 9, Part V of this title; AND

6 (7) A FEDERAL OFFICIAL AS DEFINED IN § 13-930 OF THIS TITLE TO THE  
7 EXTENT NECESSARY TO ADMINISTER PART VI OF THIS SUBTITLE.

8 (d) Tax information may be disclosed and published as statistics that are  
9 classified in a manner that prevents the identification of a particular return and the  
10 information contained in a particular return.

11 13-918.

12 (A) The Comptroller shall honor income tax refund interception requests in  
13 the following order:

14 (1) a refund interception request to collect an unpaid State, county, or  
15 municipal tax;

16 (2) a refund interception request under Title 10, Subtitle 1, Part II of the  
17 Family Law Article;

18 (3) a refund interception request for converted funds under § 15-122.2 of  
19 the Health - General Article;

20 (4) any other refund interception request by the State, county or other  
21 political subdivision of the State; [and]

22 (5) a request for intercept made by a taxing official under Part IV of this  
23 subtitle; AND

24 (6) A REQUEST FOR INTERCEPT MADE BY A FEDERAL OFFICIAL UNDER  
25 PART VI OF THIS SUBTITLE.

26 (B) THE COMPTROLLER SHALL HONOR VENDOR PAYMENT INTERCEPTION  
27 REQUESTS IN THE SAME ORDER OF PRIORITY PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS  
28 SECTION FOR HONORING INCOME TAX REFUND INTERCEPTION REQUESTS.

29 13-928. RESERVED.

30 13-929. RESERVED.

31 PART VI. FEDERAL NONTAX LIABILITIES - WITHHOLDING OF TAX REFUNDS AND  
32 PAYMENTS.

33 13-930.

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

1 (B) "FEDERAL OFFICIAL" MEANS A UNIT OR OFFICIAL OF THE FEDERAL  
2 GOVERNMENT CHARGED WITH THE COLLECTION OF NONTAX LIABILITIES PAYABLE  
3 TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PURSUANT TO 31 U.S.C. § 3716.

4 (C) "NONTAX LIABILITY DUE THE STATE" MEANS A LIABILITY CERTIFIED BY  
5 THE SECRETARY OF BUDGET AND MANAGEMENT TO THE COMPTROLLER.

6 (D) "REFUND" MEANS AN AMOUNT DESCRIBED AS A REFUND OF TAX UNDER  
7 THE PROVISIONS OF LAW THAT AUTHORIZE ITS PAYMENT.

8 (E) "VENDOR PAYMENT":

9 (1) MEANS ANY PAYMENT, OTHER THAN A REFUND, MADE BY THE  
10 STATE TO ANY PERSON;

11 (2) INCLUDES ANY EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT TO AN EMPLOYEE OF  
12 THE STATE; AND

13 (3) DOES NOT INCLUDE A PERSON'S SALARY, WAGES, OR PENSION.

14 13-931.

15 (A) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION, A FEDERAL  
16 OFFICIAL MAY:

17 (1) CERTIFY TO THE COMPTROLLER THE EXISTENCE OF A PERSON'S  
18 DELINQUENT NONTAX LIABILITY OWED BY THE PERSON TO THE FEDERAL  
19 GOVERNMENT; AND

20 (2) REQUEST THE COMPTROLLER TO WITHHOLD ANY REFUND AND  
21 VENDOR PAYMENT TO WHICH THE PERSON IS ENTITLED.

22 (B) A FEDERAL OFFICIAL MAY CERTIFY AND REQUEST THE COMPTROLLER TO  
23 WITHHOLD A REFUND OR VENDOR PAYMENT ONLY IF THE LAWS OF THE UNITED  
24 STATES:

25 (1) ALLOW THE COMPTROLLER, ON BEHALF OF THE STATE, TO CERTIFY  
26 TAX AND NONTAX LIABILITIES DUE TO THE STATE;

27 (2) ALLOW THE COMPTROLLER, ON BEHALF OF THE STATE, TO ENTER  
28 INTO A RECIPROCAL AGREEMENT WITH THE UNITED STATES, PURSUANT TO WHICH  
29 THE FEDERAL OFFICIAL WOULD BE REQUIRED TO OFFSET FEDERAL PAYMENTS TO  
30 COLLECT DELINQUENT DEBTS OWED TO THE STATE; AND

31 (3) PROVIDE FOR THE PAYMENT OF THE AMOUNT WITHHELD TO THE  
32 STATE.

33 (C) THE COMPTROLLER SHALL APPLY A REFUND OR VENDOR PAYMENT  
34 RECEIVED FROM A FEDERAL OFFICIAL ACCORDING TO THE PRIORITIES UNDER §  
35 13-918 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

1 13-932.

2 (A) A CERTIFICATION BY A FEDERAL OFFICIAL TO THE COMPTROLLER SHALL  
3 INCLUDE:

4 (1) THE FULL NAME AND ADDRESS OF THE PERSON AND ANY OTHER  
5 NAMES KNOWN TO BE USED BY THE PERSON;

6 (2) THE SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER OR FEDERAL TAX IDENTIFICATION  
7 NUMBER;

8 (3) THE AMOUNT OF THE NONTAX LIABILITY; AND

9 (4) A STATEMENT THAT THE DEBT IS PAST DUE AND LEGALLY  
10 ENFORCEABLE IN THE AMOUNT CERTIFIED AND THAT THERE ARE NO LEGAL  
11 BARRIERS TO COLLECTION BY OFFSET.

12 (B) THE COMPTROLLER SHALL DETERMINE IF A PERSON FOR WHOM A  
13 CERTIFICATION IS RECEIVED IS DUE A REFUND OF MARYLAND TAX OR A VENDOR  
14 PAYMENT.

15 (C) SUBJECT TO § 13-931(B) OF THIS SUBTITLE AND SUBSECTION (D) OF THIS  
16 SECTION, AS TO ANY PERSON DUE A REFUND OR VENDOR PAYMENT, THE  
17 COMPTROLLER SHALL:

18 (1) WITHHOLD ANY REFUND AND VENDOR PAYMENT THAT IS DUE A  
19 PERSON WHOSE NAME HAS BEEN CERTIFIED BY A FEDERAL OFFICIAL;

20 (2) NOTIFY THE PERSON OF THE AMOUNT WITHHELD IN ACCORDANCE  
21 WITH THE CERTIFICATION BY A FEDERAL OFFICIAL OF THE EXISTENCE OF A  
22 LIABILITY;

23 (3) PAY TO THE FEDERAL OFFICIAL THE LESSER OF:

24 (I) THE ENTIRE REFUND AND VENDOR PAYMENT; OR

25 (II) THE AMOUNT CERTIFIED;

26 (4) PAY ANY REFUND AND VENDOR PAYMENT IN EXCESS OF THE  
27 CERTIFIED AMOUNT TO THE PERSON; AND

28 (5) WITHHOLD AMOUNTS FROM SUBSEQUENT REFUNDS AND VENDOR  
29 PAYMENTS DUE THE PERSON IF THE INITIAL REFUND AND VENDOR PAYMENT IS  
30 LESS THAN THE CERTIFIED AMOUNT.

31 (D) IF AN INDIVIDUAL FILED A JOINT INCOME TAX RETURN AND THE DEBT  
32 CERTIFIED BY A FEDERAL OFFICIAL IS NOT THE LIABILITY OF BOTH PARTIES TO THE  
33 JOINT INCOME TAX RETURN, THE COMPTROLLER MAY NOT WITHHOLD OR PAY TO  
34 THE FEDERAL OFFICIAL THAT PORTION OF THE INCOME TAX REFUND  
35 ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE INDIVIDUAL NOT OWING THE DEBT.

1 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
2 July 1, 2006.