

# HOUSE BILL 989

C8

(7lr1492)

## **ENROLLED BILL**

— *Economic Matters / Finance* —

Introduced by **Delegates Harrison, Branch, and Conway**

Read and Examined by Proofreaders:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Proofreader.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Proofreader.

Sealed with the Great Seal and presented to the Governor, for his approval this

\_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ o'clock, \_\_\_\_\_ M.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Speaker.

CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Maryland Small Business Development Financing Authority – Financing**  
3 **Limitations**

4 FOR the purpose of altering certain limitations on lending, guarantees, and equity  
5 participation financing by the Maryland Small Business Development  
6 Financing Authority in certain transactions; altering the maximum amount of a  
7 loan guarantee that the Authority may make using the Contract Financing  
8 Fund; altering the maximum amount of a loan guarantee that the Authority  
9 may make using the Guaranty Fund; altering the scope of contracts for which  
10 the Authority may act as a surety and guarantee losses incurred by certain  
11 sureties under the Small Business Surety Bond Program and certain

---

**EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.**

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike-out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.

*Italics indicate opposite chamber / conference committee amendments.*



1 limitations; altering certain limitations on the amount of equity and investment  
 2 that the Authority may own in certain businesses and franchises under the  
 3 equity participation financing program; altering certain limitations on the  
 4 qualifications of certain enterprises and principals seeking to acquire certain  
 5 existing businesses in connection with equity participation financing provided  
 6 by the Authority; requiring that certain reports include a certain evaluation;  
 7 requiring that the Authority submit certain reports to certain committees of the  
 8 General Assembly; providing for the effective date of certain provisions of this  
 9 Act; and generally relating to the Maryland Small Business Development  
 10 Financing Authority.

11 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
 12 Article 83A – Department of Business and Economic Development  
 13 Section 5–1022(a), 5–1024(a), 5–1029(a), 5–1035(a) and (d)(1), and 5–1046  
 14 Annotated Code of Maryland  
 15 (2003 Replacement Volume and 2006 Supplement)

16 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
 17 Article 83A – Department of Business and Economic Development  
 18 Section 5–1035(a)  
 19 Annotated Code of Maryland  
 20 (2003 Replacement Volume and 2006 Supplement)  
 21 (As enacted by Section 1 of this Act)

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

24 **Article 83A – Department of Business and Economic Development**

25 5–1022.

26 (a) The Authority may utilize the Contract Financing Fund to guarantee a  
 27 loan made to an applicant only if:

28 (1) The applicant meets the qualifications required by this subtitle;

29 (2) The loan is to be used to perform a contract, the majority of  
 30 funding for which is provided by the federal government or a state government, a local  
 31 government, or a utility regulated by the Public Service Commission;

1           (3) The [part of the loan to be guaranteed] **MAXIMUM AMOUNT**  
2 **PAYABLE BY THE AUTHORITY UNDER ITS GUARANTEE** does not exceed  
3 **[\$1,000,000] \$2,000,000**; and

4           (4) The loan to be guaranteed is to be used for:

5                   (i) Working capital; or

6                   (ii) Equipment needed to perform the contract, the cost of which  
7 can be repaid from contract proceeds, if the Authority has entered into an agreement  
8 with the applicant necessary to secure the loan or guaranty.

9 5-1024.

10          (a) The Authority may utilize the Contract Financing Fund to lend money to  
11 an applicant only if:

12                   (1) The applicant meets the requirements of this subtitle;

13                   (2) The loan does not exceed **[\$1,000,000] \$2,000,000**;

14                   (3) The loan is to be used to perform a contract, the majority of  
15 funding for which is provided by the federal government or a state government, a local  
16 government, or a utility regulated by the Public Service Commission; and

17                   (4) The loan is to be used for:

18                           (i) Working capital; or

19                           (ii) Equipment needed to perform the contract, the cost of which  
20 can be repaid from contract proceeds, if the Authority has entered into an agreement  
21 with the applicant necessary to secure the loan.

22 5-1029.

23          (a) The Authority may utilize the Guaranty Fund to guarantee up to 80  
24 percent of the principal of and interest on a long-term loan made by a financial  
25 institution to an applicant only if:

26                   (1) The applicant meets the requirements of § 5-1025 and has not  
27 violated any provisions of § 5-1031 of this subtitle;

1                   (2)    The loan amount is not less than \$5,000 and the maximum amount  
2 payable by the Authority under its guarantee does not exceed [\$1,000,000]  
3 **\$2,000,000**;

4                   (3)    The purposes for which the loan is to be used include:

5                           (i)    Working capital;

6                           (ii)   Refinancing existing debt of the applicant;

7                           (iii)   The acquisition and related installation of machinery or  
8 equipment;

9                           (iv)   Necessary improvements to real property leased or owned in  
10 fee simple by the applicant; or

11                           (v)    The acquisition of real property to be owned in fee simple by  
12 the applicant if:

13                                   1.    The real property is to be used in the operation of the  
14 applicant's trade or business for which the loan and guarantee are sought; and

15                                   2.    A lien is placed on the real property by the financial  
16 institution or the Authority;

17                   (4)    The loan shall mature in not more than 10 years from the date of  
18 closing of the loan; and

19                   (5)    The rate of interest on the loan is no greater than the rate of  
20 interest determined by the Authority to be the monthly weighted average of the prime  
21 lending rate, plus 2 percent, prevailing from time to time in the City of Baltimore on  
22 unsecured commercial loans.

23   5-1035.

24           (a)    Subject to the restrictions of this Part VI, the Authority, on application,  
25 may guarantee any surety up to the lesser of 90 percent or [\$1,350,000] **\$5,000,000** of  
26 its losses incurred under a bid bond, a payment bond, or a performance bond on any  
27 contract[, the majority of the funding for which is provided] **FINANCED** by the federal  
28 government or a state government, a local [government] **GOVERNMENT, A PRIVATE**  
29 **ENTITY**, or a utility regulated by the Public Service Commission.

1           (d)   (1)   The Authority may execute and perform bid, performance, and  
2 payment bonds as a surety for the benefit of a principal in connection with any  
3 contract[, the majority of the funding for which is provided] **FINANCED** by the federal  
4 government or a state government, a local government, **A PRIVATE ENTITY**, or a  
5 utility regulated by the Public Service Commission.

6   5-1046.

7           (a)   Under the Program, the Authority may provide equity participation  
8 financing, including the purchase of qualified securities issued by a franchise, by a  
9 technology-based business, [or] by an enterprise acquiring an existing business, **OR**  
10 **BY ANY OTHER TYPE OF BUSINESS**, only after the enterprise has submitted an  
11 application that contains a business plan, including:

12                   (1)   A description of the franchisor, technology-based business, other  
13 business, or existing business and its management, product, and market;

14                   (2)   A statement of the amount, immediacy of need, and projected use  
15 of the capital required;

16                   (3)   A statement of the potential economic impact of the purchase;

17                   (4)   Information that relates to the satisfaction of the applicant's  
18 requirements of subsections (f) and (g) of this section; and

19                   (5)   Any other information the Authority requires.

20           (b)   Under the Program, any equity participation financing shall satisfy the  
21 following requirements:

22                   (1)   The Authority may not:

23                           (i)   1.   Own securities representing more than [45] **49**  
24 percent of the voting stock of any franchise, technology-based business, or other  
25 business; or

26                                   2.   Own an interest greater than [45] **49** percent in any  
27 franchise, technology-based business, or other business; or

28                           (ii)  1.   Own securities representing more than [25] **49**  
29 percent of the voting stock of any enterprise acquiring an existing business; or



1           (5) The value of the business entity at the time of recovery shall be  
2 determined after obtaining at least 1 independent appraisal of the value from an  
3 appraiser selected from a list of at least 3 appraisers supplied by the Authority.

4           (c) The liability of the State and of the Authority in providing equity  
5 participation financing is limited to its investments under the Program.

6           (d) When [applying] **AN ENTERPRISE APPLIES** to the Authority to acquire  
7 an existing business, [an] **THE** enterprise **OR ITS PRINCIPALS** shall [have] **MEET** the  
8 following minimum qualifications:

9           (1) The enterprise or its principals shall have[:

10                   (i) A minimum net worth of at least \$75,000 pledged as  
11 security;

12                   (ii) At least \$75,000 in equity investment; or

13                   (iii) A combination of a minimum net worth pledged as security  
14 and] an equity investment[, totaling at least \$75,000] **EQUAL TO AT LEAST 5**  
15 **PERCENT OF THE TOTAL COST OF THE ACQUISITION;** and

16           (2) The enterprise or its principals shall have had 3 or more years of  
17 successful experience with demonstrated achievements and management  
18 responsibilities.

19           (e) When being acquired, the existing business shall meet the following  
20 minimum qualifications:

21           (1) The existing business shall have been in existence for at least 5  
22 years;

23           (2) The existing business shall have been profitable for at least 2 of  
24 the previous 3 years;

25           (3) The existing business shall have sufficient cash flow to service the  
26 debt and ensure adequate return of the Authority's investment;

27           (4) The existing business shall have the capacity for growth and job  
28 creation;

1                   (5)     The existing business shall have its principal place of business in  
2 Maryland; and

3                   (6)     The existing business shall have a strong customer base.

4           (f)     If the applicant enterprise is an individual, the applicant shall satisfy the  
5 Authority that:

6                   (1)     The applicant is of good moral character;

7                   (2)     As determined from creditors, employers, and other individuals  
8 who have personal knowledge of the applicant, the applicant has a reputation for  
9 financial responsibility;

10                  (3)     The applicant is a resident of Maryland or the applicant's principal  
11 place of business is in Maryland; and

12                  (4)     The applicant is unable to obtain adequate business financing on  
13 reasonable terms through normal lending channels because the applicant:

14                           (i)     Belongs to a group that historically has been deprived of  
15 access to normal economic or financial resources because of race, color, creed, sex,  
16 religion, or national origin;

17                           (ii)    Has an identifiable physical handicap that severely limits  
18 the ability of the applicant to obtain financial assistance, but does not limit the ability  
19 of the applicant to perform the contract or other activity for which the applicant would  
20 be receiving financial assistance;

21                           (iii)  Has any other social or economic impediment that is beyond  
22 the personal control of the applicant, such as lack of formal education or financial  
23 capacity or geographical or regional economic distress but that does not limit the  
24 ability of the applicant to perform the contract or other activity for which the applicant  
25 would be receiving financial assistance; or

26                           (iv)   Does not meet the established credit or investment criteria  
27 of at least one financial institution.

28           (g)     If the applicant enterprise is other than a sole proprietorship, at least 51  
29 percent of the enterprise shall be owned by individuals who meet the qualifications for  
30 applicants under subsection (f) of this section.

1 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland  
2 read as follows:

3 **Article 83A – Department of Business and Economic Development**

4 5–1035.

5 (a) Subject to the restrictions of this Part VI, the Authority, on application,  
6 may guarantee any surety up to the lesser of 90 percent or [\$5,000,000] **\$1,350,000** of  
7 its losses incurred under a bid bond, a payment bond, or a performance bond on any  
8 contract financed by the federal government or a state government, a local  
9 government, a private entity, or a utility regulated by the Public Service Commission.

10 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That Section 2 of this Act shall  
11 take effect on the taking effect of the termination provision specified in Section 4 of  
12 Chapter 299 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 2006. This Act may not be  
13 interpreted to have any effect on that termination provision.

14 SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Maryland Small  
15 Business Development Financing Authority shall:

16 (1) include in the annual reports required to be made by December 31, 2007,  
17 and December 31, 2008, under Article 83A, § 5–1011 of the Code an evaluation of the  
18 impact of the changes enacted by Section 1 of this Act in the levels of assistance the  
19 Authority may provide, on:

20 (i) the number and amounts of loans and guarantees made by the  
21 Authority during the periods covered by the reports; and

22 (ii) the ability of the Authority to adequately assist eligible businesses  
23 under each financing program administered by the Authority; and

24 (2) provide the annual reports to the Senate Finance Committee and the  
25 House Economic Matters Committee.

26 SECTION ~~4~~ 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, subject to the  
27 provisions of Section 3 of this Act, this Act shall take effect October 1, 2007.