

Chapter 658

(House Bill 193)

AN ACT concerning

Civil Proceedings – Foreign Defamation Judgments – ~~Enforceability~~ Recognition, Enforceability, and Bases of Personal Jurisdiction

FOR the purpose of authorizing a court in this State to exercise personal jurisdiction for certain purposes and under certain circumstances over a certain person who obtains a certain foreign defamation judgment; ~~prohibiting recognition of certain foreign judgments;~~ establishing that certain foreign defamation judgments may not be recognized in this State unless a certain court makes a certain determination; ~~authorizing a court to award costs and reasonable attorney's fees to a party opposing recognition or enforcement of a certain foreign judgment;~~ defining a certain term; providing for the application of this Act; and generally relating to recognition and enforceability of certain foreign defamation judgments and personal jurisdiction over certain persons who obtain certain foreign defamation judgments.

BY adding to

Article – Courts and Judicial Proceedings

Section 6–103.3 and 10–704(c)

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2006 Replacement Volume and 2009 Supplement)

~~BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,~~

~~Article – Courts and Judicial Proceedings~~

~~Section 10–704~~

~~Annotated Code of Maryland~~

~~(2006 Replacement Volume and 2009 Supplement)~~

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

Article – Courts and Judicial Proceedings

6–103.3.

(A) IN THIS SECTION, “DEFAMATION” INCLUDES INVASION OF PRIVACY BY FALSE FACTS.

(B) A COURT MAY EXERCISE PERSONAL JURISDICTION, TO THE FULLEST EXTENT PERMITTED BY THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION, OVER

ANY PERSON WHO OBTAINS A JUDGMENT IN A DEFAMATION PROCEEDING OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES AGAINST ANY PERSON WHO IS A RESIDENT OF THIS STATE OR IS OTHERWISE SUBJECT TO JURISDICTION IN THIS STATE FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING DECLARATORY RELIEF WITH RESPECT TO THAT PERSON'S LIABILITY FOR THE JUDGMENT OR DETERMINING WHETHER THE JUDGMENT ~~SHOULD~~ MAY NOT BE RECOGNIZED UNDER § 10-704 OF THIS ARTICLE IF THE RESIDENT OR PERSON SUBJECT TO JURISDICTION IN THIS STATE:

(1) HAS ASSETS IN THIS STATE THAT MIGHT BE USED TO SATISFY THE FOREIGN DEFAMATION JUDGMENT; OR

(2) MAY HAVE TO TAKE ACTIONS IN THIS STATE TO COMPLY WITH THE FOREIGN DEFAMATION JUDGMENT.

10-704.

~~(A) IN THIS SECTION, "DEFAMATION" INCLUDES INVASION OF PRIVACY BY FALSE FACTS.~~

~~[(a)] (B) A foreign judgment is not conclusive if:~~

~~(1) The judgment was rendered under a system which does not provide impartial tribunals or procedures compatible with the requirements of due process of law;~~

~~(2) The foreign court did not have personal jurisdiction over the defendant;~~

~~(3) The foreign court did not have jurisdiction over the subject matter;~~
~~or~~

~~(4) The judgment was obtained by fraud.~~

~~(b) A foreign judgment [need] MAY not be recognized if:~~

~~(1) The defendant in the proceedings in the foreign court did not receive notice of the proceedings in sufficient time to enable him to defend;~~

~~(2) The cause of action on which the judgment is based is repugnant to the public policy of the State;~~

~~(3) The judgment conflicts with another final and conclusive judgment;~~

~~(4) The proceeding in the foreign court was contrary to an agreement between the parties under which the dispute was to be settled out of court; [or]~~

~~(5) In the case of jurisdiction based only on personal service, the foreign court was a seriously inconvenient forum for the trial of the action;~~

(C) (1) IN THIS SUBSECTION, "DEFAMATION" INCLUDES INVASION OF PRIVACY BY FALSE FACTS.

(2) A FOREIGN JUDGMENT MAY NOT BE RECOGNIZED IF:

~~(6)~~ **(I) THE CAUSE OF ACTION RESULTED IN A DEFAMATION JUDGMENT OBTAINED IN A JURISDICTION OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES, UNLESS THE COURT BEFORE WHICH THE MATTER IS BROUGHT IN THIS STATE FIRST DETERMINES THAT THE DEFAMATION LAW APPLIED IN THE FOREIGN JURISDICTION PROVIDES FOR AT LEAST AS MUCH PROTECTION FOR FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND THE PRESS AS IS PROVIDED BY BOTH THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION AND THE MARYLAND CONSTITUTION; OR**

~~(7)~~ **(II) THE CAUSE OF ACTION RESULTED IN A DEFAMATION JUDGMENT ENTERED AGAINST THE PROVIDER OF AN INTERACTIVE COMPUTER SERVICE, AS DEFINED IN 47 U.S.C. § 230, UNLESS THE COURT BEFORE WHICH THE MATTER IS BROUGHT IN THIS STATE DETERMINES THAT THE JUDGMENT IS CONSISTENT WITH 47 U.S.C. § 230.**

~~(C) IN ANY ACTION BROUGHT IN A COURT OF THIS STATE UNDER § 6-103.3 OF THIS ARTICLE OR TO ENFORCE A FOREIGN JUDGMENT, THE COURT MAY AWARD THE PARTY OPPOSING RECOGNITION OR ENFORCEMENT OF THE FOREIGN JUDGMENT, IF THE PARTY PREVAILS IN THE ACTION ON A GROUND SPECIFIED IN THIS SECTION.~~

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall be construed to apply only prospectively and may not be applied or interpreted to have any effect on or application to any case filed in a court of this State before the effective date of this Act.

SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2010.

Approved by the Governor, May 20, 2010.