

HOUSE BILL 542

D4

4lr0551
CF SB 17

By: **Delegate Luedtke**

Introduced and read first time: January 29, 2014

Assigned to: Judiciary

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Family Law – Performance of Marriage Ceremonies**

3 FOR the purpose of authorizing a certain individual authorized by a clerk of a circuit
4 court to perform a marriage ceremony in the State; establishing that the
5 authority of a certain individual to perform a marriage ceremony expires at a
6 certain time; authorizing the Court of Appeals to adopt rules to implement this
7 Act; and generally relating to the performance of marriage ceremonies.

8 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
9 Article – Family Law
10 Section 2–406
11 Annotated Code of Maryland
12 (2012 Replacement Volume and 2013 Supplement)

13 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
14 Article – Family Law
15 Section 2–409
16 Annotated Code of Maryland
17 (2012 Replacement Volume and 2013 Supplement)

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

20 **Article – Family Law**

21 2–406.

22 (a) (1) In this subsection, “judge” means:

23 (i) a judge of the District Court, a circuit court, the Court of
24 Special Appeals, or the Court of Appeals;

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (ii) a judge approved under Article IV, § 3A of the Maryland
2 Constitution and § 1–302 of the Courts Article for recall and assignment to the District
3 Court, a circuit court, the Court of Special Appeals, or the Court of Appeals;

4 (iii) a judge of a United States District Court, a United States
5 Court of Appeals, or the United States Tax Court; or

6 (iv) a judge of a state court if the judge is active or retired but
7 eligible for recall.

8 (2) A marriage ceremony may be performed in this State by:

9 (i) any official of a religious order or body authorized by the
10 rules and customs of that order or body to perform a marriage ceremony;

11 (ii) any clerk;

12 (iii) any deputy clerk designated by the county administrative
13 judge of the circuit court for the county; [or]

14 (iv) a judge; **OR**

15 **(V) AN INDIVIDUAL TEMPORARILY AUTHORIZED BY A**
16 **CLERK TO PERFORM A SPECIFIC MARRIAGE CEREMONY.**

17 (b) Within 6 months after a license becomes effective, any authorized official
18 may perform the marriage ceremony of the individuals named in the license.

19 (c) (1) An individual may not perform a marriage ceremony unless the
20 individual is authorized to perform a marriage ceremony under subsection (a) of this
21 section.

22 (2) An individual who violates this subsection is guilty of a
23 misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to a fine of \$500.

24 (d) (1) An individual may not knowingly perform a marriage ceremony
25 between individuals who are prohibited from marrying under § 2–202 of this title.

26 (2) An individual who violates the provisions of this subsection is
27 guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to a fine of \$500.

28 (e) (1) An individual may not perform a marriage ceremony without a
29 license that is effective under this subtitle.

30 (2) An individual who violates the provisions of this subsection is
31 guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to a fine not exceeding \$500.

1 (f) The county administrative judge of the circuit court for the county shall
2 designate:

3 (1) when and where the clerk or deputy clerk may perform a marriage
4 ceremony; and

5 (2) the form of the marriage ceremony to be recited by the clerk or
6 deputy clerk and the parties being married.

7 (g) This section does not affect the right of any religious denomination to
8 perform a marriage ceremony in accordance with the rules and customs of the
9 denomination.

10 **(H) (1) THE AUTHORITY OF AN INDIVIDUAL DESCRIBED IN**
11 **SUBSECTION (A)(2)(V) OF THIS SECTION TO PERFORM A SPECIFIC MARRIAGE**
12 **CEREMONY SHALL EXPIRE WHEN THE INDIVIDUAL RETURNS THE MARRIAGE**
13 **CERTIFICATE TO THE CLERK UNDER § 2-409 OF THIS SUBTITLE.**

14 **(2) THE COURT OF APPEALS MAY ADOPT RULES TO IMPLEMENT**
15 **THE PROVISIONS OF SUBSECTION (A)(2)(V) OF THIS SECTION.**

16 2-409.

17 (a) Each marriage certificate shall contain:

18 (1) the name, signature, and title of the authorized official who
19 performs the marriage ceremony; or

20 (2) if the individuals are married in a Society of Friends marriage
21 ceremony, the signatures of the individuals and the attestation of the certificate by 2
22 overseers of the marriage ceremony.

23 (b) (1) The authorized official who performs the marriage ceremony shall:

24 (i) hand 1 marriage certificate to the individuals; and

25 (ii) return, within 5 days from the date of the marriage
26 ceremony, the other marriage certificate to the clerk who issued the license to which
27 the certificates were attached, but if the authorized official who performs the marriage
28 ceremony dies or resigns, some other individual shall return the certificate.

29 (2) If the individuals are married in a Society of Friends marriage
30 ceremony, they:

31 (i) may keep 1 marriage certificate; and

1 (ii) within 5 days from the date of the marriage ceremony, shall
2 return the other marriage certificate to the clerk who issued the license to which the
3 certificates were attached.

4 (c) If the marriage certificate is not returned within 6 months after the date
5 on which the license becomes effective, the clerk who issued the license shall attempt
6 to determine whether the marriage ceremony was performed and, if so, the name of
7 the authorized official who performed the marriage ceremony.

8 (d) (1) An individual who performs a marriage ceremony or who is
9 married in a Society of Friends marriage ceremony may not violate the provisions of
10 subsection (b)(1)(ii) or (2)(ii) of this section.

11 (2) An individual who violates any provision of this subsection is
12 guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to a fine in an amount that the
13 court considers appropriate.

14 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
15 July 1, 2014.