

# HOUSE BILL 722

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HB 1184/18 – JUD

9lr2445  
CF 9lr2446

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By: **Delegates Beitzel, Buckel, Corderman, Ghrist, Krebs, McComas, Morgan, and Szeliga**

Introduced and read first time: February 8, 2019

Assigned to: Judiciary

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Criminal Law – Theft of a Firearm**

3 FOR the purpose of classifying the theft of a firearm as a felony; establishing certain  
4 penalties for theft of a firearm; and generally relating to theft of a firearm.

5 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
6 Article – Criminal Law  
7 Section 7–104  
8 Annotated Code of Maryland  
9 (2012 Replacement Volume and 2018 Supplement)

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

12 **Article – Criminal Law**

13 7–104.

14 (a) A person may not willfully or knowingly obtain or exert unauthorized control  
15 over property, if the person:

16 (1) intends to deprive the owner of the property;

17 (2) willfully or knowingly uses, conceals, or abandons the property in a  
18 manner that deprives the owner of the property; or

19 (3) uses, conceals, or abandons the property knowing the use, concealment,  
20 or abandonment probably will deprive the owner of the property.

21 (b) A person may not obtain control over property by willfully or knowingly using

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 deception, if the person:

2 (1) intends to deprive the owner of the property;

3 (2) willfully or knowingly uses, conceals, or abandons the property in a  
4 manner that deprives the owner of the property; or

5 (3) uses, conceals, or abandons the property knowing the use, concealment,  
6 or abandonment probably will deprive the owner of the property.

7 (c) (1) A person may not possess stolen personal property knowing that it has  
8 been stolen, or believing that it probably has been stolen, if the person:

9 (i) intends to deprive the owner of the property;

10 (ii) willfully or knowingly uses, conceals, or abandons the property  
11 in a manner that deprives the owner of the property; or

12 (iii) uses, conceals, or abandons the property knowing that the use,  
13 concealment, or abandonment probably will deprive the owner of the property.

14 (2) In the case of a person in the business of buying or selling goods, the  
15 knowledge required under this subsection may be inferred if:

16 (i) the person possesses or exerts control over property stolen from  
17 more than one person on separate occasions;

18 (ii) during the year preceding the criminal possession charged, the  
19 person has acquired stolen property in a separate transaction; or

20 (iii) being in the business of buying or selling property of the sort  
21 possessed, the person acquired it for a consideration that the person knew was far below a  
22 reasonable value.

23 (3) In a prosecution for theft by possession of stolen property under this  
24 subsection, it is not a defense that:

25 (i) the person who stole the property has not been convicted,  
26 apprehended, or identified;

27 (ii) the defendant stole or participated in the stealing of the property;

28 (iii) the property was provided by law enforcement as part of an  
29 investigation, if the property was described to the defendant as being obtained through the  
30 commission of theft; or

31 (iv) the stealing of the property did not occur in the State.

1 (4) Unless the person who criminally possesses stolen property  
2 participated in the stealing, the person who criminally possesses stolen property and a  
3 person who has stolen the property are not accomplices in theft for the purpose of any rule  
4 of evidence requiring corroboration of the testimony of an accomplice.

5 (d) A person may not obtain control over property knowing that the property was  
6 lost, mislaid, or was delivered under a mistake as to the identity of the recipient or nature  
7 or amount of the property, if the person:

8 (1) knows or learns the identity of the owner or knows, is aware of, or  
9 learns of a reasonable method of identifying the owner;

10 (2) fails to take reasonable measures to restore the property to the owner;  
11 and

12 (3) intends to deprive the owner permanently of the use or benefit of the  
13 property when the person obtains the property or at a later time.

14 (e) A person may not obtain the services of another that are available only for  
15 compensation:

16 (1) by deception; or

17 (2) with knowledge that the services are provided without the consent of  
18 the person providing them.

19 (f) Under this section, an offender's intention or knowledge that a promise would  
20 not be performed may not be established by or inferred solely from the fact that the promise  
21 was not performed.

22 (g) (1) **THIS SUBSECTION DOES NOT APPLY TO THEFT OF A FIREARM.**

23 (2) A person convicted of theft of property or services with a value of:

24 (i) at least \$1,500 but less than \$25,000 is guilty of a felony and:

25 1. is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 5 years or a fine  
26 not exceeding \$10,000 or both; and

27 2. shall restore the property taken to the owner or pay the  
28 owner the value of the property or services;

29 (ii) at least \$25,000 but less than \$100,000 is guilty of a felony and:

30 1. is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 10 years or a fine  
31 not exceeding \$15,000 or both; and

1   2.       shall restore the property taken to the owner or pay the  
2 owner the value of the property or services; or

3   (iii)   \$100,000 or more is guilty of a felony and:

4   1.       is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 20 years or a fine  
5 not exceeding \$25,000 or both; and

6   2.       shall restore the property taken to the owner or pay the  
7 owner the value of the property or services.

8   **[(2)] (3)**       Except as provided in paragraph **[(3)] (4)** of this subsection, a  
9 person convicted of theft of property or services with a value of at least \$100 but less than  
10 \$1,500, is guilty of a misdemeanor and:

11                                        (i)       is subject to:

12                                        1.       for a first conviction, imprisonment not exceeding 6  
13 months or a fine not exceeding \$500 or both; and

14                                        2.       for a second or subsequent conviction, imprisonment not  
15 exceeding 1 year or a fine not exceeding \$500 or both; and

16                                       (ii)      shall restore the property taken to the owner or pay the owner  
17 the value of the property or services.

18                                       **[(3)] (4)**       A person convicted of theft of property or services with a value of  
19 less than \$100 is guilty of a misdemeanor and:

20                                       (i)       is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 90 days or a fine not  
21 exceeding \$500 or both; and

22                                       (ii)      shall restore the property taken to the owner or pay the owner  
23 the value of the property or services.

24                                       **[(4)] (5)**       Subject to paragraph **[(5)] (6)** of this subsection, a person who  
25 has four or more prior convictions under this subtitle and who is convicted of theft of  
26 property or services with a value of less than \$1,500 under paragraph **[(2)] (3)** of this  
27 subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor and:

28                                       (i)       is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 5 years or a fine not  
29 exceeding \$5,000 or both; and

30                                       (ii)      shall restore the property taken to the owner or pay the owner  
31 the value of the property or services.

1            **[(5)] (6)**        The court may not impose the penalties under paragraph **[(4)]**  
2 **(5)** of this subsection unless the State's Attorney serves notice on the defendant or the  
3 defendant's counsel before the acceptance of a plea of guilty or nolo contendere or at least  
4 15 days before trial that:

5                    (i)        the State will seek the penalties under paragraph **[(4)] (5)** of this  
6 subsection; and

7                    (ii)       lists the alleged prior convictions.

8            **(H) (1) A PERSON CONVICTED OF THEFT OF A FIREARM, INCLUDING AN**  
9 **ANTIQUE FIREARM OR A REPLICA OF AN ANTIQUE FIREARM, IS GUILTY OF A FELONY**  
10 **AND IS SUBJECT TO:**

11                    **(I) FOR A FIRST CONVICTION, IMPRISONMENT FOR NOT LESS**  
12 **THAN 2 YEARS AND NOT EXCEEDING 5 YEARS OR A FINE NOT EXCEEDING \$1,000 OR**  
13 **BOTH; AND**

14                    **(II) FOR A SECOND OR SUBSEQUENT CONVICTION,**  
15 **IMPRISONMENT FOR NOT LESS THAN 5 YEARS AND NOT EXCEEDING 10 YEARS OR A**  
16 **FINE NOT EXCEEDING \$2,500 OR BOTH.**

17                    **(2) NOTWITHSTANDING § 14–102 OF THIS ARTICLE, THE COURT MAY**  
18 **NOT IMPOSE LESS THAN THE MANDATORY MINIMUM SENTENCE OF:**

19                    **(I) FOR A FIRST CONVICTION, 2 YEARS; AND**

20                    **(II) FOR A SECOND OR SUBSEQUENT CONVICTION, 5 YEARS.**

21                    **(3) THE COURT MAY NOT SUSPEND ANY PART OF THE MANDATORY**  
22 **MINIMUM SENTENCE OF:**

23                    **(I) FOR A FIRST CONVICTION, 2 YEARS; AND**

24                    **(II) FOR A SECOND OR SUBSEQUENT CONVICTION, 5 YEARS.**

25                    **(4) A SENTENCE IMPOSED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) SHALL BE**  
26 **SEPARATE FROM AND CONSECUTIVE TO A SENTENCE FOR ANY OTHER OFFENSE.**

27            **[(h)] (I) (1)**        If a person is convicted of a violation under this section for failure  
28 to pay for motor fuel after the motor fuel was dispensed into a vehicle, the court shall:

29                    (i)        notify the person that the person's driver's license may be  
30 suspended under § 16–206.1 of the Transportation Article; and

1 (ii) notify the Motor Vehicle Administration of the violation.

2 (2) The Chief Judge of the District Court and the Administrative Office of  
3 the Courts, in conjunction with the Motor Vehicle Administration, shall establish uniform  
4 procedures for reporting a violation under this subsection.

5 ~~[(i)]~~ **(J)** An action or prosecution for a violation of subsection ~~[(g)(2) or (3)]~~  
6 **(G)(3) OR (4)** of this section shall be commenced within 2 years after the commission of  
7 the crime.

8 ~~[(j)]~~ **(K)** A person who violates this section by use of an interactive computer  
9 service may be prosecuted, indicted, tried, and convicted in any county in which the victim  
10 resides or the electronic communication originated or terminated.

11 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
12 October 1, 2019.