

# HOUSE BILL 518

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1r1773  
CF 1r1772

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By: **Delegate Dumais**

Introduced and read first time: January 15, 2021

Assigned to: Ways and Means

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Public Libraries – Electronic Book Licenses – Access**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring a publisher who offers to license an electronic book to the  
4 public to also offer to license the electronic book to public libraries in the State on  
5 reasonable terms that would enable public libraries to provide library users with  
6 access to the electronic book; requiring the terms of a license authorizing public  
7 libraries to provide access to an electronic book to include certain limitations and  
8 measures; prohibiting the terms of a license from including a limitation on the  
9 number of licenses public libraries may purchase on the same date an electronic book  
10 license is made available to the public; providing that a violation of this Act shall  
11 constitute an unfair, abusive, or deceptive trade practice subject to certain  
12 enforcement; defining certain terms; and generally relating to electronic book  
13 licenses.

14 BY adding to

15 Article – Education

16 Section 23–701 and 23–702 to be under the new subtitle “Subtitle 7. Electronic Book  
17 Licenses”

18 Annotated Code of Maryland

19 (2018 Replacement Volume and 2020 Supplement)

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

22 **Article – Education**

23 **SUBTITLE 7. ELECTRONIC BOOK LICENSES.**

24 **23–701.**

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (A) IN THIS SUBTITLE THE FOLLOWING TERMS HAVE THE MEANINGS  
2 INDICATED.

3 (B) "ELECTRONIC BOOK" MEANS A TEXT DOCUMENT THAT HAS BEEN  
4 CONVERTED INTO OR PUBLISHED IN A DIGITAL FORMAT THAT IS READ ON A  
5 COMPUTER, TABLET, SMART PHONE, OR OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICE.

6 (C) "PUBLISHER" MEANS A PERSON IN THE BUSINESS OF MANUFACTURING,  
7 PROMULGATING, AND SELLING BOOKS, JOURNALS, MAGAZINES, NEWSPAPERS, OR  
8 OTHER LITERARY PRODUCTIONS, INCLUDING THOSE IN DIGITAL FORM, THAT  
9 CONSIST OF TEXT, IMAGERY, OR BOTH.

10 (D) "UNFAIR, ABUSIVE, OR DECEPTIVE TRADE PRACTICES" HAS THE  
11 MEANING STATED IN § 13-301 OF THE COMMERCIAL LAW ARTICLE.

12 23-702.

13 (A) SUBJECT TO SUBSECTIONS (B) AND (C) OF THIS SECTION, A PUBLISHER  
14 WHO OFFERS TO LICENSE AN ELECTRONIC BOOK TO THE PUBLIC ALSO SHALL OFFER  
15 TO LICENSE THE ELECTRONIC BOOK TO PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN THE STATE ON  
16 REASONABLE TERMS THAT WOULD ENABLE PUBLIC LIBRARIES TO PROVIDE  
17 LIBRARY USERS WITH ACCESS TO THE ELECTRONIC BOOK.

18 (B) THE TERMS OF A LICENSE UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION  
19 SHALL INCLUDE:

20 (1) A LIMITATION ON THE NUMBER OF USERS A PUBLIC LIBRARY MAY  
21 SIMULTANEOUSLY ALLOW TO ACCESS AN ELECTRONIC BOOK;

22 (2) A LIMITATION ON THE NUMBER OF DAYS A PUBLIC LIBRARY MAY  
23 ALLOW A USER TO ACCESS AN ELECTRONIC BOOK; AND

24 (3) THE USE OF TECHNOLOGICAL PROTECTION MEASURES THAT  
25 WOULD PREVENT A USER FROM:

26 (i) MAINTAINING ACCESS TO AN ELECTRONIC BOOK BEYOND  
27 THE ACCESS PERIOD SPECIFIED IN THE LICENSE; AND

28 (ii) ALLOWING OTHER USERS TO ACCESS AN ELECTRONIC  
29 BOOK.

30 (C) THE TERMS OF A LICENSE UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION  
31 MAY NOT INCLUDE A LIMITATION ON THE NUMBER OF ELECTRONIC BOOK LICENSES

1 A PUBLIC LIBRARY MAY PURCHASE ON THE SAME DATE THE ELECTRONIC BOOK  
2 LICENSE IS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC.

3 (D) A VIOLATION OF THIS SUBTITLE SHALL CONSTITUTE AN UNFAIR,  
4 ABUSIVE, OR DECEPTIVE TRADE PRACTICE AND IS SUBJECT TO ENFORCEMENT IN  
5 ACCORDANCE WITH TITLE 13, SUBTITLE 4 OF THE COMMERCIAL LAW ARTICLE.

6 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July  
7 1, 2021.