

# HOUSE BILL 182

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CF 3lr1167

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By: **Delegates Reznik and Lopez**

Introduced and read first time: January 18, 2023

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Real Property – Unlawfully Restrictive Covenants – Modification by**  
3 **Municipalities**

4 FOR the purpose of authorizing a municipality to execute and record a restrictive covenant  
5 modification to an unlawfully restrictive covenant for a property within the  
6 boundaries of the municipality subject to a certain notice requirement; providing  
7 that persons with an ownership interest in property that is subject to an unlawfully  
8 restrictive covenant may decline action by a municipality to execute and record a  
9 restrictive covenant modification; and generally relating to unlawfully restrictive  
10 covenants.

11 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
12 Article – Real Property  
13 Section 3–112  
14 Annotated Code of Maryland  
15 (2015 Replacement Volume and 2022 Supplement)

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

18 **Article – Real Property**

19 3–112.

20 (a) In this section, “unlawfully restrictive covenant” means any recorded covenant  
21 or restriction that restricts ownership based on race, religious belief, or national origin.

22 (b) This section does not apply to an unlawfully restrictive covenant that is part  
23 of a declaration, uniform general scheme, or plan of development of a homeowners  
24 association, as defined in § 11B–101 of this article.

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (c) (1) A person may execute and record a restrictive covenant modification to  
2 an unlawfully restrictive covenant in accordance with this section if the person:

3 [(1)] (I) Holds an ownership interest in property that the person believes  
4 is subject to the unlawfully restrictive covenant; or

5 [(2)] (II) Is a nonprofit entity that is required to enforce within a defined  
6 residential neighborhood:

7 [(i)] 1. Covenants that limit architectural alterations,  
8 renovations, landscaping elements, or other modifications to residential lots in the  
9 neighborhood; and

10 [(ii)] 2. The unlawfully restrictive covenant.

11 (2) (I) **SUBJECT TO SUBPARAGRAPH (II) OF THIS PARAGRAPH, A**  
12 **MUNICIPALITY MAY EXECUTE AND RECORD A RESTRICTIVE COVENANT**  
13 **MODIFICATION TO AN UNLAWFULLY RESTRICTIVE COVENANT IN ACCORDANCE WITH**  
14 **THIS SECTION IF:**

15 1. **THE PROPERTY THAT THE MUNICIPALITY BELIEVES**  
16 **IS SUBJECT TO AN UNLAWFULLY RESTRICTIVE COVENANT IS WITHIN THE**  
17 **BOUNDARIES OF THE MUNICIPALITY; AND**

18 2. **AT LEAST 30 DAYS BEFORE EXECUTING AND**  
19 **RECORDING THE RESTRICTIVE COVENANT MODIFICATION, THE MUNICIPALITY**  
20 **PROVIDES WRITTEN NOTICE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SUBPARAGRAPH (III) OF THIS**  
21 **PARAGRAPH OF THE MUNICIPALITY'S INTENT TO EXECUTE AND RECORD THE**  
22 **RESTRICTIVE COVENANT MODIFICATION TO ALL PERSONS WITH AN OWNERSHIP**  
23 **INTEREST IN THE PROPERTY.**

24 (II) **A PERSON WITH AN OWNERSHIP INTEREST IN THE**  
25 **PROPERTY MAY DECLINE TO HAVE THE RESTRICTIVE COVENANT MODIFICATION**  
26 **EXECUTED AND RECORDED BY THE MUNICIPALITY BY NOTIFYING THE**  
27 **MUNICIPALITY WITHIN 30 DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF NOTICE.**

28 (III) **NOTICE UNDER SUBPARAGRAPH (I)2 OF THIS PARAGRAPH**  
29 **SHALL:**

30 1. **BE SENT BY FIRST-CLASS MAIL; AND**

31 2. **PROVIDE INFORMATION ON HOW A PERSON WITH AN**  
32 **OWNERSHIP INTEREST IN THE PROPERTY MAY DECLINE TO HAVE THE RESTRICTIVE**  
33 **COVENANT MODIFICATION EXECUTED AND RECORDED BY THE MUNICIPALITY.**

1 (d) (1) A restrictive covenant modification shall:

2 (i) Consist of a complete copy of the original instrument containing  
3 the unlawfully restrictive covenant with the language of the unlawfully restrictive covenant  
4 stricken; and

5 (ii) Be accompanied by a complete restrictive covenant modification  
6 intake sheet, on the form that the Administrative Office of the Courts provides.

7 (2) The restrictive covenant modification intake sheet described in  
8 paragraph (1)(ii) of this subsection shall:

9 (i) 1. Be signed by the record owner of the property; or

10 2. In the case of a nonprofit entity, be accompanied by a  
11 statement that a majority of the governing body of the nonprofit entity has agreed to the  
12 restrictive covenant modification;

13 (ii) Reference the book and page number or other place where the  
14 original instrument containing the unlawfully restrictive covenant is recorded; and

15 (iii) Include any other information that the Administrative Office of  
16 the Courts considers necessary in carrying out the requirements of this section.

17 (e) (1) On receipt of a restrictive covenant modification, the clerk of the circuit  
18 court shall submit the restrictive covenant modification together with a copy of the original  
19 instrument referenced in the restrictive covenant modification to the county attorney.

20 (2) The county attorney shall:

21 (i) Review the restrictive covenant modification and the copy of the  
22 original instrument to determine:

23 1. Whether the original instrument contains an unlawfully  
24 restrictive covenant; and

25 2. Whether the restrictive covenant modification correctly  
26 strikes through only the language of the unlawfully restrictive covenant; and

27 (ii) On completion of the review, return the restrictive covenant  
28 modification and copy of the original to the clerk of the circuit court together with the  
29 county attorney's determination.

30 (3) The clerk of the circuit court may not record a restrictive covenant  
31 modification unless the county attorney determines that the modification is appropriate in  
32 accordance with paragraph (2) of this subsection.

1 (f) A restrictive covenant modification shall be indexed in the same manner as  
2 the original instrument.

3 (g) (1) Subject to all covenants, conditions, and restrictions that were recorded  
4 after the recording of the original instrument, the restrictions contained in the restrictive  
5 covenant modification, once recorded, are the only restrictions based on the original  
6 instrument that apply to the property.

7 (2) The effective date of the terms and conditions contained in the  
8 restrictive covenant modification shall be the same as the effective date of the original  
9 instrument.

10 (h) If a person causes to be recorded a restrictive covenant modification that  
11 contains modifications not authorized under this section:

12 (1) The clerk of the circuit court may not incur any liability for recording  
13 the restrictive covenant modification;

14 (2) The county may not incur any liability as a result of a determination  
15 rendered by the county attorney under subsection (e) of this section; and

16 (3) Any liability that results from the unauthorized recordation shall be  
17 the sole responsibility of the person that executed the restrictive covenant modification.

18 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
19 October 1, 2023.