

HOUSE BILL 209

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3lr1160
CF SB 58

By: **Delegate Watson**

Introduced and read first time: January 20, 2023

Assigned to: Economic Matters

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Corporations and Associations – Revisions**

3 FOR the purpose of altering certain provisions governing the issuance of stock, convertible
4 securities, and scrip; clarifying the authority of corporations to hold annual meetings
5 by remote communication; clarifying the application of certain provisions of law to
6 the conversion of a corporation; requiring a real estate investment trust that
7 voluntarily dissolves to file a notice of termination with the State Department of
8 Assessments and Taxation; authorizing the charter or bylaws of a nonstock
9 corporation to provide for the service of certain ex officio directors; providing for the
10 application of certain provisions of law regarding voting rights to statutory trusts;
11 and generally relating to corporations and associations.

12 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
13 Article – Corporations and Associations
14 Section 2–203, 2–210, 2–214, 2–501(b), 2–503(c), 4–601, 4A–402(a)(5), 5–202(b), and
15 8–502
16 Annotated Code of Maryland
17 (2014 Replacement Volume and 2022 Supplement)

18 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
19 Article – Corporations and Associations
20 Section 2–501(a), 2–503(a), and 4A–402(a)(8)(viii) and (9)
21 Annotated Code of Maryland
22 (2014 Replacement Volume and 2022 Supplement)

23 BY adding to
24 Article – Corporations and Associations
25 Section 12–307
26 Annotated Code of Maryland
27 (2014 Replacement Volume and 2022 Supplement)

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



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

3 **Article – Corporations and Associations**

4 2–203.

5 (a) Before the issuance of stock or convertible securities, the board of directors
6 shall adopt a resolution that:

7 (1) Authorizes the issuance;

8 (2) Sets the minimum consideration for the stock or convertible securities
9 or a formula for its determination; and

10 (3) Fairly describes any consideration other than money.

11 (b) In the absence of actual fraud in the transaction, the minimum consideration
12 stated in the charter or determined by the board of directors in its resolution is conclusive
13 for all purposes.

14 (c) For purposes of this section, the consideration for stock issued as a stock
15 dividend is the resulting capitalization of surplus.

16 (d) This section does not apply to the issuance of stock or convertible securities as
17 part of:

18 (1) A reclassification of stock effected by amendment of the charter; or

19 (2) A consolidation, merger, [or] share exchange, **OR CONVERSION**,
20 including a consolidation, merger, [or] share exchange, **OR CONVERSION** to which a wholly
21 owned subsidiary of the corporation is a party.

22 (e) If its issuance is authorized in accordance with this subtitle, stock with par
23 value and securities convertible into stock with par value may be issued as full paid and
24 nonassessable even if the price or value of the consideration received is less than the par
25 value of the stock issued or the stock into which the securities are convertible.

26 (f) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section or § 2–204 or § 2–206 of
27 this subtitle, a corporation may issue stock or other securities of the corporation pursuant
28 to § 2–103(13) of this title without consideration of any kind.

29 2–210.

30 (a) Except as provided in subsections (b) and (c) of this section, each stockholder
31 is entitled to stock certificates [which] **THAT** represent and certify the shares of stock [he]
32 **THE STOCKHOLDER** holds in the corporation.

1 (b) A stock certificate may not be issued until the stock represented by it is fully
2 paid.

3 (c) (1) Unless the charter or bylaws provide otherwise, the board of directors
4 of a corporation may authorize the issue of some or all of the shares of any or all of its
5 classes or series without certificates.

6 (2) The authorization under paragraph (1) of this subsection does not affect
7 shares already represented by certificates until they are surrendered to the corporation.

8 (3) For shares issued without certificates, on request by a stockholder, the
9 corporation shall send the stockholder, without charge, a statement in writing or by
10 electronic transmission of the information required on certificates by § 2-211 of this
11 subtitle.

12 **(D) A CORPORATION MAY NOT ISSUE A STOCK CERTIFICATE IN BEARER**
13 **FORM.**

14 2-214.

15 (a) A corporation may, but is not obliged to:

16 (1) Issue fractional shares of stock;

17 (2) Eliminate a fractional interest by rounding up to a full share of stock;

18 (3) Arrange for the disposition of a fractional interest by the person entitled
19 to it;

20 (4) Pay cash for the fair value of a fractional share of stock determined as
21 of the time when the person entitled to receive it is determined; or

22 (5) Issue scrip or other evidence of ownership which:

23 (i) Entitles its holder to exchange scrip or other evidence of
24 ownership aggregating a full share for a certificate which represents the share; and

25 (ii) Unless otherwise provided, does not entitle its holder to exercise
26 voting rights, receive dividends, or participate in the assets of the corporation in the event
27 of liquidation.

28 (b) The board of directors may impose any reasonable condition on the issuance
29 of the scrip or other evidence of ownership, including a condition that:

30 (1) It becomes void if not exchanged for a certificate representing a full
31 share of stock before a specified date;

1 (2) The corporation may sell the stock for which the scrip or other evidence
2 of ownership is exchangeable and distribute the proceeds to the holders; or

3 (3) The proceeds of a sale under paragraph (2) of this subsection are
4 forfeited to the corporation if not claimed within a specified period not less than three years
5 from the date the scrip or other evidence of ownership was originally issued.

6 **(C) A CORPORATION MAY NOT ISSUE A CERTIFICATE REPRESENTING SCRIP**
7 **IN BEARER FORM.**

8 **(D) FOR SCRIP ISSUED WITHOUT A CERTIFICATE, ON REQUEST BY A**
9 **SCRIPHOLDER, THE CORPORATION SHALL DELIVER TO THE SCRIPHOLDER,**
10 **WITHOUT CHARGE, A STATEMENT IN WRITING OR BY ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION OF**
11 **THE INFORMATION REQUIRED TO BE ON A CERTIFICATE UNDER § 2-211 OF THIS**
12 **SUBTITLE.**

13 2-501.

14 (a) Each corporation shall hold an annual meeting of its stockholders to elect
15 directors and transact any other business within its powers.

16 (b) (1) If the charter or bylaws of a corporation [registered under] **THAT IS AN**
17 **INVESTMENT COMPANY AS DEFINED IN** the Investment Company Act of 1940 so
18 provides, the corporation is not required to hold an annual meeting in any year in which
19 the election of directors is not required to be acted upon under the Investment Company
20 Act of 1940.

21 (2) If a corporation is required under paragraph (1) of this subsection to
22 hold a meeting of stockholders to elect directors, the meeting shall be designated as the
23 annual meeting of stockholders for that year.

24 2-503.

25 (a) Unless the charter provides otherwise, meetings of stockholders shall be held
26 as is:

27 (1) Provided in the charter or bylaws; or

28 (2) Set by the board of directors under the provisions of the charter or
29 bylaws.

30 (c) If authorized by the board of directors and subject to any guidelines and
31 procedures that the board adopts, stockholders and proxy holders not physically present at
32 the meeting of the stockholders, may, by remote communication:

1 (1) Participate in the meeting of the stockholders; and

2 (2) Be considered present in person and may vote at the meeting of the
3 stockholders, whether the meeting is held at a designated place or **PARTIALLY OR** solely
4 by remote communication, if:

5 (i) The corporation implements reasonable measures to verify that
6 each person considered present and authorized to vote at the meeting by remote
7 communication is a stockholder or proxy holder;

8 (ii) The corporation implements reasonable measures to provide the
9 stockholders and proxy holders a reasonable opportunity to participate in the meeting and
10 to vote on matters submitted to the stockholders, including an opportunity to read or hear
11 the proceedings of the meeting substantially concurrently with the proceedings; and

12 (iii) In the event any stockholder or proxy holder votes or takes other
13 action at the meeting by remote communication, a record of the vote or other action is
14 maintained by the corporation.

15 4–601.

16 (A) [A] **SUBJECT TO SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION**, A consolidation,
17 merger, share exchange, [or] transfer of assets, **OR CONVERSION** of a close corporation
18 shall be made in accordance with the provisions of Title 3 of this article.

19 (B) [However, approval] **APPROVAL** of a proposed consolidation or merger, a
20 transfer of [its] assets, **A CONVERSION**, or an acquisition of [its] stock in a share exchange
21 requires the affirmative vote of every stockholder of the **CLOSE** corporation.

22 4A–402.

23 (a) Except for the requirement set forth in § 4A–404 of this subtitle that certain
24 consents be in writing, members may enter into an operating agreement not inconsistent
25 with the articles of organization to regulate or establish any aspect of the affairs of the
26 limited liability company, the conduct of its business, or the relations of its members,
27 including provisions establishing:

28 (5) (i) The right to have and a procedure for having a member's
29 membership interest evidenced by a certificate issued by the limited liability company,
30 which may **NOT** be issued in bearer form [only if specifically allowed by the operating
31 agreement];

32 (ii) The procedure for assignment, pledge, or transfer of any
33 membership interest represented by the certificate; and

34 (iii) Any other provisions dealing with the certificate;

1 (8) Procedures relating to:

2 (viii) Any other matter with respect to the exercise of voting rights by
3 members; or

4 (9) That a membership interest, an economic interest, or a noneconomic
5 interest may or shall be transferred or assigned in whole or in part to one or more persons,
6 including on the occurrence of any of the events described in § 4A-606 of this title,
7 regardless of whether the persons to whom the interest is transferred or assigned are
8 members.

9 5-202.

10 (b) Notwithstanding any other provision of this article, the charter or bylaws of a
11 nonstock corporation may:

12 (1) Divide the directors or members of the corporation into classes;

13 (2) Prescribe the tenure and conditions of service of its directors, but no
14 class of directors may be elected to serve for a period shorter than the interval between
15 annual meetings unless:

16 (i) All or a class of directors must be members; and

17 (ii) Qualifications for membership have the effect of shortening their
18 tenure of service;

19 (3) **PROVIDE THAT AN INDIVIDUAL MAY SERVE AS A DIRECTOR BY**
20 **REASON OF SERVING IN A SPECIFIED OFFICE OR POSITION WITHIN OR OUTSIDE THE**
21 **CORPORATION AND PRESCRIBE THAT THE INDIVIDUAL SHALL SERVE AS A DIRECTOR**
22 **DURING THE INDIVIDUAL'S SERVICE IN THE SPECIFIED OFFICE OR POSITION;**

23 (4) Prescribe the rights, privileges, and qualifications of its members;

24 ~~[(4)] (5)~~ Prescribe the manner of giving notice of any meeting of its
25 members;

26 ~~[(5)] (6)~~ Provide for the number or proportion of voting members whose
27 presence in person or by proxy constitutes a quorum at any meeting of its members;

28 ~~[(6)] (7)~~ Provide that any action may be taken or authorized by any
29 number or proportion of the votes of all its members or all its directors entitled to vote;

30 ~~[(7)] (8)~~ Deny or limit the right of its members to vote by proxy;

1 **[(8) (9)** Provide for the right of members to vote by mail or by electronic
2 transmission on a stated proposal or for the election of directors or any officers who are
3 elected by members;

4 **[(9) (10)** Regulate the management of the business and affairs of the
5 corporation; and

6 **[(10) (11)** Regulate the exercise or allocation of voting power between or
7 among the directors and members.

8 8-502.

9 (a) A real estate investment trust may terminate its existence by voluntary
10 dissolution[. The Department shall be notified of the effective date of the dissolution.] **IN**
11 **ACCORDANCE WITH SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION.**

12 (b) [A real estate investment trust may curtail or cease its trust activities by
13 partially or completely distributing its assets.]

14 **(1) IN ORDER TO TERMINATE ITS EXISTENCE, A REAL ESTATE**
15 **INVESTMENT TRUST MUST FILE A NOTICE OF TERMINATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT**
16 **THAT INCLUDES:**

17 **(I) THE NAME OF THE REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT TRUST;**

18 **(II) 1. A STATEMENT THAT THE TERMINATION OF THE REAL**
19 **ESTATE INVESTMENT TRUST BY VOLUNTARY DISSOLUTION WAS APPROVED IN THE**
20 **MANNER AND BY THE VOTE REQUIRED BY LAW AND BY THE DECLARATION OF TRUST**
21 **OF THE REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT TRUST; AND**

22 **2. A STATEMENT DETAILING THE MANNER OF**
23 **APPROVAL;**

24 **(III) ALL OTHER PROVISIONS THE BOARD OF THE REAL ESTATE**
25 **INVESTMENT TRUST CONSIDERS NECESSARY TO DISSOLVE AND TERMINATE THE**
26 **REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT TRUST; AND**

27 **(IV) A STATEMENT THAT THE REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT TRUST**
28 **IS DISSOLVED AND TERMINATED.**

29 **(2) THE NOTICE OF TERMINATION SHALL BE EXECUTED BY:**

30 **(I) THE CHAIRMAN OR VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF**
31 **TRUSTEES;**

1 (II) THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER;

2 (III) THE CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER;

3 (IV) THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER;

4 (V) THE PRESIDENT OR A VICE PRESIDENT; OR

5 (VI) IF AUTHORIZED BY THE BYLAWS OR A RESOLUTION OF THE
6 BOARD OF TRUSTEES, ANY OTHER OFFICER OR AGENT OF THE REAL ESTATE
7 INVESTMENT TRUST.

8 (C) (1) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION,
9 THE REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT TRUST IS DISSOLVED AND TERMINATED ON THE
10 LATER OF:

11 (I) THE TIME THAT THE DEPARTMENT ACCEPTS THE NOTICE
12 OF TERMINATION FOR RECORD; OR

13 (II) THE TIME ESTABLISHED BY THE NOTICE OF TERMINATION,
14 NOT TO EXCEED 30 DAYS AFTER THE NOTICE IS ACCEPTED FOR RECORD.

15 (2) THE REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT TRUST CONTINUES TO EXIST FOR
16 THE PURPOSE OF:

17 (I) PAYING, SATISFYING, AND DISCHARGING ANY EXISTING
18 DEBTS OR OBLIGATIONS;

19 (II) COLLECTING AND DISTRIBUTING ASSETS; AND

20 (III) TAKING ALL OTHER ACTIONS REQUIRED TO LIQUIDATE AND
21 WIND UP ITS BUSINESS AND AFFAIRS.

22 [(c)] (D) (1) The Attorney General may institute proceedings to dissolve a
23 real estate investment trust [which] THAT has abused, misused, or failed to use its powers.

24 (2) The proceedings shall be brought in the manner and on the grounds
25 provided in Title 3, Subtitle 5 of this article with respect to dissolution of a corporation for
26 misuse of its franchise.

27 [(2)] (3) The venue of an action under this subsection is in a county where
28 an officer or resident agent of the real estate investment trust is located.

1 12-307.

2 (A) NOTWITHSTANDING § 3-709 OF THIS ARTICLE, THE PROVISIONS OF
3 TITLE 3, SUBTITLE 7 OF THIS ARTICLE APPLY TO A STATUTORY TRUST FORMED ON
4 OR AFTER OCTOBER 1, 2023, THAT IS A CLOSED-END INVESTMENT COMPANY AS
5 DEFINED IN THE INVESTMENT COMPANY ACT OF 1940.

6 (B) NOTWITHSTANDING § 3-709 OF THIS ARTICLE, THE GOVERNING
7 INSTRUMENT OF A STATUTORY TRUST FORMED BEFORE OCTOBER 1, 2023, THAT IS
8 A CLOSED-END INVESTMENT COMPANY AS DEFINED IN THE INVESTMENT COMPANY
9 ACT OF 1940 MAY PROVIDE THAT TITLE 3, SUBTITLE 7 OF THIS ARTICLE APPLIES
10 TO THE STATUTORY TRUST.

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