

Chapter 611

(House Bill 994)

AN ACT concerning

**Business Regulation – Travel Services – Special Fund, Fees, and Surety
Requirement
(Don’t You Worry (Wurie) Act)**

FOR the purpose of establishing the Sellers of Travel Services Registration Fund as a special, nonlapsing fund in the Maryland Department of Labor; requiring that certain investment earnings be credited to the General Fund of the State; requiring the Secretary of Labor to annually calculate certain costs; authorizing the Department to set by regulation certain fees based on certain calculations; prohibiting certain fees from increasing by more than a certain amount each year; requiring certain providers of travel services to file with the Department proof of professional liability and errors and omissions liability in at least a certain amount; and generally relating to the financial security of providers of travel services.

BY adding to

Article – Business Regulation

Section 2–106.17 and 2–106.18; and 17–2201 through 17–2203 to be under the new subtitle “Subtitle 22. Travel Services”

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

Article – Business Regulation

2–106.17.

(A) IN THIS SECTION, “FUND” MEANS THE SELLERS OF TRAVEL SERVICES REGISTRATION FUND.

(B) (1) THERE IS A SELLERS OF TRAVEL SERVICES REGISTRATION FUND.

(2) THE FUND IS A SPECIAL, NONLAPSING FUND THAT IS NOT SUBJECT TO § 7–302 OF THE STATE FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT ARTICLE.

(C) (1) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL PAY ALL FEES COLLECTED UNDER TITLE 17, SUBTITLE 22 OF THIS ARTICLE TO THE COMPTROLLER.

(2) THE COMPTROLLER SHALL DISTRIBUTE THE FEES TO THE FUND.

(D) THE FUND SHALL BE USED TO COVER THE ACTUAL DOCUMENTED DIRECT AND INDIRECT COSTS OF FULFILLING THE STATUTORY AND REGULATORY DUTIES OF THE DEPARTMENT UNDER TITLE 17, SUBTITLE 22 OF THIS ARTICLE.

(E) THE SECRETARY OR A DESIGNEE OF THE SECRETARY SHALL ADMINISTER THE FUND.

(F) ~~THE LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR SHALL AUDIT THE ACCOUNTS AND TRANSACTIONS OF THE FUND~~ MAY BE SUBJECT TO AUDIT AS PROVIDED IN § 2-1220 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE.

(G) ANY INVESTMENT EARNINGS OF THE FUND SHALL BE CREDITED TO THE GENERAL FUND OF THE STATE.

2-106.18.

(A) THE SECRETARY SHALL ANNUALLY CALCULATE THE DIRECT AND INDIRECT COSTS ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE DEPARTMENT UNDER TITLE 17, SUBTITLE 22 OF THIS ARTICLE.

(B) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ESTABLISH FEES BASED ON THE CALCULATIONS PROVIDED BY THE SECRETARY UNDER THIS SECTION.

(C) EACH FEE ESTABLISHED BY THE DEPARTMENT UNDER TITLE 17, SUBTITLE 22 OF THIS ARTICLE MAY NOT BE INCREASED ANNUALLY BY MORE THAN 12.5% OF THE EXISTING AND CORRESPONDING FEES OF THE DEPARTMENT UNDER TITLE 17, SUBTITLE 22 OF THIS ARTICLE.

SUBTITLE 22. TRAVEL SERVICES.

17-2201.

(A) IN THIS SUBTITLE THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED.

(B) “INDEPENDENT AGENT” MEANS A PERSON THAT OFFERS OR UNDERTAKES TO ARRANGE FOR OR PROVIDE THE TRAVEL SERVICES SPECIFIED IN SUBSECTION (C)(1)(II) OF THIS SECTION BUT DOES NOT:

(1) RECEIVE MONEY OR OTHER VALUABLE CONSIDERATION DIRECTLY FROM THE PURCHASER FOR THE SALE OF TRAVEL SERVICES OR FROM THE ULTIMATE TRAVEL SUPPLIER;

(2) POSSESS AT ANY TIME ANY UNISSUED TICKET STOCK OR TRAVEL DOCUMENT; OR

(3) HAVE THE ABILITY TO ISSUE TICKETS, VACATION CERTIFICATES, OR ANY OTHER TRAVEL DOCUMENTS.

(C) (1) "SELLER OF TRAVEL" MEANS A PERSON THAT:

(I) IS LOCATED IN THE STATE OR OFFERS TO SELL TRAVEL SERVICES TO A PERSON LOCATED IN THE STATE;

(II) OFFERS OR UNDERTAKES TO ARRANGE OR PROVIDE FOR:

1. TRAVEL RESERVATIONS OR ACCOMMODATIONS;
2. TICKETS FOR TRAVEL BY ANY MODE OF TRANSPORTATION;
3. HOTEL OR MOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS;
4. CAR RENTALS; OR
5. SIGHTSEEING TOURS; AND

(III) RECEIVES VALUABLE CONSIDERATION DIRECTLY FROM THE PURCHASER FOR THE SALE OF TRAVEL SERVICES OR FROM THE ULTIMATE TRAVEL SUPPLIER.

(2) "SELLER OF TRAVEL" DOES NOT INCLUDE:

(I) AN AIR CARRIER;

(II) AN OCEAN CARRIER; OR ~~OR~~

(III) A HOTEL, MOTEL, PERSON THAT RENTS OR OPERATES A SHORT-TERM RENTAL UNIT AS DEFINED IN § 11-101 OF THE TAX - GENERAL ARTICLE FOR A PERIOD OF LESS THAN 30 CONSECUTIVE DAYS, SHORT-TERM RENTAL PLATFORM AS DEFINED IN § 11-101 OF THE TAX - GENERAL ARTICLE, OR SIMILAR LODGING ESTABLISHMENT THAT, IN THE COURSE OF SELLING, PROVIDING, OR

ARRANGING TRANSIENT LODGING ACCOMMODATIONS AND RELATED SERVICES FOR ITS REGISTERED GUESTS:

1. ARRANGES OR PROVIDES FOR TRANSPORTATION; AND
2. DOES NOT DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY RECEIVE MONEY OR OTHER VALUABLE CONSIDERATION FOR ARRANGING OR PROVIDING TRANSPORTATION;

~~(IV) A PERSON THAT RENTS OR OPERATES A SHORT TERM RENTAL UNIT, AS DEFINED IN § 11-101 OF THE TAX GENERAL ARTICLE, FOR A PERIOD OF LESS THAN 30 CONSECUTIVE DAYS; OR~~

~~(V) A SHORT TERM RENTAL PLATFORM, AS DEFINED IN § 11-101 OF THE TAX GENERAL ARTICLE.~~

17-2202.

(A) (1) EACH SELLER OF TRAVEL OR INDEPENDENT AGENT SHALL FILE ANNUALLY WITH THE DEPARTMENT PROOF OF PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY AND ERRORS AND OMISSIONS INSURANCE IN THE AMOUNT OF AT LEAST \$1,000,000 AS REQUIRED BY THIS SUBTITLE.

(2) EACH SELLER OF TRAVEL SHALL FILE ANNUALLY WITH THE DEPARTMENT A LIST OF INDEPENDENT AGENTS AFFILIATED WITH THE SELLER OF TRAVEL.

(3) THE ANNUAL FILING FEE IS \$300.

(B) A PERSON MAY NOT RECEIVE VALUABLE CONSIDERATION IN PAYMENT FOR SERVICES OFFERED FOR SALE BY A SELLER OF TRAVEL OR AN INDEPENDENT AGENT UNLESS, AT THE TIME OF RECEIVING THE PAYMENT, THE SELLER OF TRAVEL OR INDEPENDENT AGENT HAS MET THE ANNUAL FILING REQUIREMENTS UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION.

(C) (1) EXCEPT AS OTHERWISE PROVIDED BY LAW, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL PAY ALL FEES COLLECTED UNDER THIS TITLE TO THE COMPTROLLER.

(2) THE COMPTROLLER SHALL DISTRIBUTE THE FEES TO THE SELLERS OF TRAVEL SERVICES REGISTRATION FUND ESTABLISHED IN § 2-106.17 OF THIS ARTICLE.

17-2203.

THE DEPARTMENT SHALL:

- (1) PROVIDE REASONABLE NOTICE OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS SUBTITLE TO CONSUMERS AND SELLERS OF TRAVEL;**
- (2) ENFORCE THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SUBTITLE; AND**
- (3) ADOPT REGULATIONS TO CARRY OUT THIS SUBTITLE, INCLUDING REGULATIONS ESTABLISHING REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES FOR THE REGISTRATION OF SELLERS OF TRAVEL AND PROVIDING FOR THE ENFORCEMENT OF THIS SUBTITLE.**

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2026.

Approved by the Governor, May 26, 2026.