

HOUSE BILL 244

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(PRE-FILED)

6lr0138

CF SB 214

By: Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee (By Request – Departmental – Natural Resources)

Requested: September 26, 2025

Introduced and read first time: January 14, 2026

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Natural Resources – Vessel Transfers – Transfer-on-Death Beneficiary** 3 **Designation**

4 FOR the purpose of authorizing an individual who is the sole owner of a certain vessel to
5 apply to the Department of Natural Resources to designate a beneficiary to take
6 ownership of the vessel on the death of the owner; requiring a designated beneficiary
7 who survives the owner of a vessel to apply to the Department for a new certificate
8 of title for the vessel; requiring an application for a certificate of title for a vessel to
9 contain certain information; and generally relating to beneficiary designations for
10 vessels.

11 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
12 Article – Natural Resources
13 Section 8-715(e)
14 Annotated Code of Maryland
15 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

16 BY adding to
17 Article – Natural Resources
18 Section 8-720.1
19 Annotated Code of Maryland
20 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

23 **Article – Natural Resources**

24 8-715.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (e) **(1)** Every owner of a vessel subject to titling under the provisions of this
2 subtitle shall apply to the Department for issuance of a certificate of title for the vessel
3 within 30 days after acquisition.

4 (2) The application shall [be]:

(I) BE on forms the Department prescribes, and accompanied by the required fee and tax[. The application shall be];

17 (v) CONTAIN ANY additional information the Department requires.

21 8-720.1.

22 (A) IN THIS SECTION, "VESSEL" HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 8-716 OF
23 THIS SUBTITLE.

24 (B) AN INDIVIDUAL WHO IS THE SOLE OWNER OF A VESSEL MAY APPLY TO
25 THE DEPARTMENT TO DESIGNATE A BENEFICIARY TO TAKE OWNERSHIP OF THE
26 VESSEL ON THE DEATH OF THE OWNER

27 (C) THE DESIGNATION OF A BENEFICIARY MAY BE SHOWN BY THE WORDS
28 "TRANSFER-ON-DEATH" OR THE ABBREVIATION "TOD" AFTER THE NAME OF THE
29 REGISTERED OWNER ON A CERTIFICATE OF TITLE.

30 (D) (1) THE DESIGNATION OF A BENEFICIARY FOR A VESSEL DOES NOT
31 AFFECT THE OWNERSHIP OF THE VESSEL UNTIL THE DEATH OF THE OWNER OF THE
32 VESSEL.

4 (E) THE DESIGNATION OF A BENEFICIARY IS NOT REQUIRED TO BE
5 SUPPORTED BY CONSIDERATION, AND THE CERTIFICATE OF TITLE OF THE VESSEL
6 FOR WHICH THE DESIGNATION IS MADE IS NOT REQUIRED TO BE DELIVERED TO THE
7 BENEFICIARY IN ORDER FOR THE DESIGNATION TO BE EFFECTIVE.

8 (F) ON THE DEATH OF THE OWNER OF A VESSEL WHO HAS DESIGNATED A
9 BENEFICIARY, OWNERSHIP OF THE VESSEL SHALL PASS TO THE BENEFICIARY IF THE
10 BENEFICIARY SURVIVES THE OWNER.

11 (G) (1) A DESIGNATED BENEFICIARY WHO SURVIVES THE OWNER SHALL
12 APPLY TO THE DEPARTMENT FOR A NEW CERTIFICATE OF TITLE FOR THE VESSEL.

15 (I) THE ORIGINAL CERTIFICATE OF TITLE DESIGNATING THE
16 BENEFICIARY;

(H) A DEATH CERTIFICATE FOR THE DECEASED OWNER:

(iii) PROOF OF THE IDENTITY OF THE BENEFICIARY; AND

19 (IV) ANY APPLICABLE TAXES OR FEES.

20 (H) IF A DESIGNATED BENEFICIARY DOES NOT SURVIVE THE DEATH OF THE
21 OWNER, THE VESSEL IS PART OF THE ESTATE OF THE DECEASED OWNER.

22 (I) THIS SECTION DOES NOT LIMIT THE RIGHTS OF CREDITORS OF VESSEL
23 OWNERS AGAINST BENEFICIARIES AND OTHER TRANSFEREES UNDER OTHER LAWS
24 OF THIS STATE.

25 (J) THE DEPARTMENT MAY CHARGE A FEE, NOT TO EXCEED THE COSTS TO
26 THE DEPARTMENT, FOR ISSUING A CERTIFICATE OF TITLE UNDER THIS SECTION.

27 (k) THE DEPARTMENT MAY ADOPT REGULATIONS TO CARRY OUT THIS
28 SECTION.

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