

# HOUSE BILL 542

Q3  
HB 708/25 – W&M

6lr2418  
CF SB 377

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By: **Delegate Wilkins**

Introduced and read first time: January 27, 2026

Assigned to: Ways and Means

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Earned Income Tax Credit – Individuals Without Qualifying Children –**  
3 **Eligibility**

4 FOR the purpose of expanding eligibility for the Maryland earned income tax credit for  
5 individuals without qualifying children by altering the income thresholds at which  
6 the credit phases out; providing that, after a certain taxable year, the income  
7 threshold and phase-out amounts are adjusted annually for inflation; and generally  
8 relating to the Maryland earned income tax credit.

9 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
10 Article – Tax – General  
11 Section 10–704  
12 Annotated Code of Maryland  
13 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

16 **Article – Tax – General**

17 10–704.

18 (a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

19 (2) “Applicable county income tax rate” means:

20 (i) if a county imposes a marginal income tax rate, the county’s  
21 lowest marginal income tax rate for the taxable year; or

22 (ii) if a county imposes one or more flat income tax rates, the county  
23 income tax rate for the taxable year that is applicable to the taxpayer’s income level and

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 filing status as established by the county.

2 (3) "Taxpayer" means:

3 (i) an individual filing an income tax return; or

4 (ii) a married couple filing a joint income tax return.

5 (b) (1) A resident who is a taxpayer may claim a credit against the State  
6 income tax for a taxable year in the amount determined under subsection (c) of this section  
7 for earned income.

8 (2) A resident who is a taxpayer may claim a credit against the county  
9 income tax for a taxable year in the amount determined under subsection (d) of this section  
10 for earned income.

11 (c) (1) Except as provided in paragraphs (2) and (3) of this subsection and  
12 subject to subsection (e) of this section, the credit allowed against the State income tax  
13 under subsection (b)(1) of this section is the lesser of:

14 (i) 50% of the earned income credit allowable for the taxable year  
15 under § 32 of the Internal Revenue Code or that would have been allowable but for the  
16 limitation under § 32(m) of the Internal Revenue Code; or

17 (ii) the State income tax for the taxable year.

18 (2) (i) Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph and subsection (e)  
19 of this section, a resident may claim a refund in the amount, if any, by which the applicable  
20 percentage specified in subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph of the earned income credit  
21 allowable for the taxable year under § 32 of the Internal Revenue Code exceeds the State  
22 income tax for the taxable year.

23 (ii) Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, the applicable  
24 percentage of the earned income credit allowable under § 32 of the Internal Revenue Code  
25 to be used for purposes of determining the refund provided under this paragraph is:

26 1. 25% for a taxable year beginning after December 31, 2013,  
27 but before January 1, 2015;

28 2. 25.5% for a taxable year beginning after December 31,  
29 2014, but before January 1, 2016;

30 3. 26% for a taxable year beginning after December 31, 2015,  
31 but before January 1, 2017;

32 4. 27% for a taxable year beginning after December 31, 2016,  
33 but before January 1, 2018;

3 6. 45% for a taxable year beginning after December 31, 2019.

4 (iii) For purposes of determining the refund provided under this  
5 paragraph, the earned income credit allowable under § 32 of the Internal Revenue Code is  
6 calculated without regard to the limitation under § 32(m) of the Internal Revenue Code.

12 2. the limitation under § 32(m) of the Internal Revenue Code.

13 (ii) [Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, the] **THE** credit  
14 allowed against the State income tax under subsection (b)(1) of this section for an individual  
15 without a qualifying child is:

16                           1.     equal to 100% of the earned income credit allowable for a  
17     taxable year under § 32 of the Internal Revenue Code; AND

## 2. CALCULATED BY SUBSTITUTING:

26 (III) 1. FOR EACH TAXABLE YEAR BEGINNING AFTER  
27 DECEMBER 31, 2025, THE EARNED INCOME AMOUNT AND PHASE-OUT AMOUNT IN  
28 SUBPARAGRAPH (II)2 OF THIS PARAGRAPH SHALL BE INCREASED BY AN AMOUNT  
29 EQUAL TO THE PRODUCT OF MULTIPLYING EACH AMOUNT BY THE COST-OF-LIVING  
30 ADJUSTMENT SPECIFIED IN SUBSUBPARAGRAPH 2 OF THIS SUBPARAGRAPH.

1 COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT IS THE COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT WITHIN THE  
2 MEANING OF § 1(F)(3) OF THE INTERNAL REVENUE CODE FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR  
3 IN WHICH THE TAXABLE YEAR BEGINS, AS DETERMINED BY THE COMPTROLLER BY  
4 SUBSTITUTING “CALENDAR YEAR 2022” FOR “CALENDAR YEAR 2016” IN § 1(F)(3)(A)  
5 OF THE INTERNAL REVENUE CODE.

9 (iv) If the tax credit allowed under this paragraph in any taxable year  
10 exceeds the total tax otherwise payable by the individual without a qualifying child for that  
11 taxable year, the individual may claim a refund in the amount of the excess.

12 (d) (1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection and subject to  
13 subsection (e) of this section, the credit allowed against the county income tax under  
14 subsection (b)(2) of this section is the lesser of:

19 (ii) the county income tax for the taxable year.

(2) (i) A county may provide, by law, for a refundable county earned income credit as provided in this paragraph.

32 (iv) The amount of any refunds payable under a refundable county  
33 earned income credit operates to reduce the income tax revenue from individuals  
34 attributable to the county income tax for that county.

35 (e) (1) Subject to paragraph (2) of this subsection, for an individual who is a  
36 resident of the State for only a part of the year, the amount of the credit or refund allowed

1 under this section shall be determined based on the part of the earned income credit  
2 allowable for the taxable year under § 32 of the Internal Revenue Code that is attributable  
3 to Maryland, determined by multiplying the federal earned income credit by a fraction:

4 (i) the numerator of which is the Maryland adjusted gross income of  
5 the individual; and

6 (ii) the denominator of which is the federal adjusted gross income of  
7 the individual.

(2) For purposes of determining the amount of the credit or refund under paragraph (1) of this subsection, the part of the earned income credit allowable for the taxable year under § 32 of the Internal Revenue Code is calculated without regard to the limitation under § 32(m) of the Internal Revenue Code.

12 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July  
13 1, 2026, and shall be applicable to all taxable years beginning after December 31, 2025.