

HOUSE BILL 765

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6lr1760
CF SB 82

By: **Delegates Griffith, Buckel, Hartman, Ivey, A. Johnson, Phillips, and Pippy**
Introduced and read first time: February 4, 2026
Assigned to: Judiciary

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Criminal Law – Counterfeiting and Possession of Counterfeit Lease – Penalty**

3 FOR the purpose of prohibiting a person with the intent to defraud another from creating,
4 aiding in the creation of, or possessing a counterfeit lease or rental agreement; and
5 generally relating to counterfeiting and possession of a counterfeit lease or
6 counterfeit rental agreement.

7 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
8 Article – Criminal Law
9 Section 8–601
10 Annotated Code of Maryland
11 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

14 **Article – Criminal Law**

15 8–601.

16 (a) A person, with intent to defraud another, may not counterfeit, cause to be
17 counterfeited, or willingly aid or assist in counterfeiting any:

18 (1) bond;

19 (2) check;

20 (3) deed;

21 (4) draft;

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.
[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



(5) endorsement or assignment of a bond, draft, check, or promissory note;

(6) entry in an account book or ledger;

(7) **LEASE;**

(8) letter of credit;

[(8)] (9) negotiable instrument;

[(9)] (10) power of attorney;

[(10)] (11) promissory note;

[(11)] (12) release or discharge for money or property;

(13) **RENTAL AGREEMENT;**

[(12)] (14) title to a motor vehicle;

[(13)] (15) waiver or release of mechanics' lien; or

[(14)] (16) will or codicil.

(b) A person may not knowingly, willfully, and with fraudulent intent possess a counterfeit of any of the items listed in subsection (a) of this section.

(c) (1) A person who violates subsection (a) of this section is guilty of a felony and on conviction is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 10 years or a fine not exceeding \$1,000 or both.

(2) A person who violates subsection (b) of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 3 years or a fine not exceeding \$1,000 or both.

(d) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the prosecution of an alleged violation of this section or for an alleged violation of a crime based on an act that establishes a violation of this section may be commenced in any county in which:

(1) an element of the crime occurred;

(2) the deed or other alleged counterfeit instrument is recorded in the county land records, filed with the clerk of the circuit court, or filed with the register of wills;

(3) the victim resides; or

1 (4) if the victim is not an individual, the victim conducts business.

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