

# SENATE BILL 471

N2, D1  
SB 628/25 – JPR

6lr0783  
CF HB 822

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By: **Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee and Senator McKay**

Introduced and read first time: February 2, 2026

Assigned to: Judicial Proceedings

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Committee Report: Favorable

Senate action: Adopted

Read second time: March 2, 2026

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## CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Circuit Court Clerks and Registers of Wills – Maximum Salary**

3 FOR the purpose of altering the maximum annual salary of the clerks of the circuit courts  
4 and the registers of wills; repealing as obsolete a certain minimum annual salary for  
5 the register of wills for Baltimore City; and generally relating to the salaries of the  
6 clerks of the circuit courts and the registers of wills.

7 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
8 Article – Courts and Judicial Proceedings  
9 Section 2–504  
10 Annotated Code of Maryland  
11 (2020 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

12 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
13 Article – Estates and Trusts  
14 Section 2–205  
15 Annotated Code of Maryland  
16 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

19 **Article – Courts and Judicial Proceedings**

20 2–504.

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 (a) (1) The clerk of each circuit court shall receive an annual salary of not more  
2 than [\$146,500 as set by the Board of Public Works on the basis of the relative volume of  
3 business and receipts in the clerk's office] **THE SALARY OF A STATE EMPLOYEE AT**  
4 **GRADE 26, STEP 20 OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND STANDARD AND BARGAINING**  
5 **SALARY SCALE IN EFFECT ON THE DAY BEFORE THE DAY THAT THE CLERK BEGINS**  
6 **A NEW TERM OF OFFICE.**

7 (2) **ANY CHANGE IN THE SALARY PAID UNDER THE STATE OF**  
8 **MARYLAND STANDARD AND BARGAINING SALARY SCALE DURING THE TERM OF**  
9 **OFFICE OF A CLERK MAY NOT APPLY TO THE INCUMBENT CLERK, BUT THE CHANGED**  
10 **RATE SHALL TAKE EFFECT AT THE BEGINNING OF THE NEXT FOLLOWING TERM OF**  
11 **OFFICE.**

12 (3) **THE SALARY OF THE CLERK OF EACH CIRCUIT COURT SHALL BE**  
13 **SET BY THE BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS ON THE BASIS OF THE RELATIVE VOLUME OF**  
14 **BUSINESS AND RECEIPTS IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE.**

15 (b) A clerk shall devote his full working time to the duties of the clerk's office and  
16 is entitled to the salary prescribed in subsection (a) of this section.

17 (c) The salary of a clerk is payable biweekly.

## 18 Article – Estates and Trusts

19 2–205.

20 (a) (1) It is the intent of this section that each register shall receive a fair and  
21 adequate compensation for the effort and duties required of the register by the register's  
22 office.

23 (2) The volume and character of work done by the register shall be in  
24 comparison to the salary fixed by the Board of Public Works for each of the other registers.

25 (b) (1) Each register is entitled to receive an annual salary of not more than  
26 [\$146,500, to be determined in each instance by the Board of Public Works] **THE SALARY**  
27 **OF A STATE EMPLOYEE AT GRADE 26, STEP 20 OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND**  
28 **STANDARD AND BARGAINING SALARY SCALE IN EFFECT ON THE DAY BEFORE THE**  
29 **DAY THAT THE REGISTER BEGINS A NEW TERM OF OFFICE.**

30 (2) **ANY CHANGE IN THE SALARY PAID UNDER THE STATE OF**  
31 **MARYLAND STANDARD AND BARGAINING SALARY SCALE DURING THE TERM OF**  
32 **OFFICE OF A REGISTER MAY NOT APPLY TO THE INCUMBENT REGISTER, BUT THE**  
33 **CHANGED RATE SHALL TAKE EFFECT AT THE BEGINNING OF THE NEXT FOLLOWING**  
34 **TERM OF OFFICE.**

1                   **(3) THE SALARY OF EACH REGISTER SHALL BE DETERMINED BY THE**  
2 **BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS.**

3                   **[(2)] (4)** In determining the annual salary of the register, the Board of  
4 Public Works shall be guided in the exercise of its discretion by:

5                   (i) The population of the county determined by the last official  
6 United States census;

7                   (ii) The dollar volume of total fees and taxes collected and excess fees  
8 turned over to the State for each of the preceding 5 years by the office of the register for  
9 which the salary is being fixed; and

10                   (iii) Other pertinent data which have relation to the reasonableness  
11 of the salary in relation to the work done and volume handled by the office.

12                   (c) **[The minimum annual salary for the register in Baltimore City is \$12,000.**

13                   **(d)] (1)** The salaries of the registers shall be paid semimonthly from the fees  
14 and receipts of the office, after deducting the expenses of the office.

15                   (2) Expenses include salaries of deputies and clerks, books, stationery,  
16 office supplies, and other necessary and customary expenses of doing business.

17                   **[(e)] (D)** (1) (i) If the fees and receipts of the office are insufficient in any  
18 fiscal year to pay all or a part of the expenses of the office and authorized salary of a  
19 register, the deficiency shall be funded from the taxes remitted to the Comptroller by the  
20 register during that fiscal year.

21                   (ii) Written authority for the transfer of funds shall be first obtained  
22 from the Comptroller.

23                   (2) In the event that tax collections for the fiscal year are insufficient, the  
24 Comptroller shall make up the deficit from excess fees remitted from all other registers.

25                   SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, in accordance with Article  
26 III, § 35 of the Maryland Constitution, this Act may not be construed to extend or apply to  
27 the salary or compensation of a clerk of a circuit court or a register of wills while serving in  
28 a term of office beginning before the effective date of this Act, but the provisions of this Act  
29 concerning the salary or compensation of a clerk of the circuit court or a register of wills  
30 shall take effect at the beginning of the next following term of office. This limitation does  
31 not apply to an individual appointed or elected after the effective date of this Act to fill out  
32 an unexpired term.

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

Approved:

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Governor.

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President of the Senate.

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Speaker of the House of Delegates.