

SENATE BILL 518

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6lr0921
CF HB 676

By: **Senator King**

Introduced and read first time: February 3, 2026

Assigned to: Budget and Taxation

Committee Report: Favorable

Senate action: Adopted

Read second time: February 28, 2026

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Maryland Financial Empowerment Center Network Pilot Program –**
3 **Establishment**

4 FOR the purpose of establishing the Maryland Financial Empowerment Center Network
5 Pilot Program within the Office of the Comptroller; and generally relating to the
6 Maryland Financial Empowerment Center Network Pilot Program.

7 BY adding to

8 Article – Tax – General

9 Section 1–501 through 1–505 to be under the new subtitle “Subtitle 5. Maryland
10 Financial Empowerment Center Network Pilot Program”

11 Annotated Code of Maryland

12 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

15 **Article – Tax – General**

16 **SUBTITLE 5. MARYLAND FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT CENTER NETWORK PILOT**
17 **PROGRAM.**

18 **1–501.**

19 **(A) IN THIS SUBTITLE THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS**

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 INDICATED.

2 (B) "CENTER" MEANS A FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT CENTER ESTABLISHED
3 UNDER THE PILOT PROGRAM.

4 (C) "PILOT PROGRAM" MEANS THE MARYLAND FINANCIAL
5 EMPOWERMENT CENTER NETWORK PILOT PROGRAM.

6 1-502.

7 (A) THERE IS A MARYLAND FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT CENTER NETWORK
8 PILOT PROGRAM.

9 (B) THE PURPOSE OF THE PILOT PROGRAM IS TO ESTABLISH A STATEWIDE
10 NETWORK OF FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT CENTERS IN DIFFERENT REGIONS OF THE
11 STATE.

12 (C) THE COMPTROLLER SHALL IMPLEMENT AND ADMINISTER THE PILOT
13 PROGRAM.

14 1-503.

15 (A) (1) EACH CENTER SHALL PROVIDE ONE-ON-ONE FINANCIAL
16 COUNSELING AND COACHING SERVICES FREE OF CHARGE, INCLUDING
17 INFORMATION ON HOW TO:

18 (I) INCREASE SAVINGS;

19 (II) PAY DOWN DEBT;

20 (III) ACCESS BANKING; AND

21 (IV) IMPROVE CREDIT SCORES.

22 (2) EACH CENTER SHALL MAKE THE INFORMATION PROVIDED UNDER
23 THIS SUBSECTION AVAILABLE IN ENGLISH, SPANISH, AND ANY OTHER LANGUAGE
24 REQUIRED BY THE OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER.

25 (B) EACH FINANCIAL COUNSELOR EMPLOYED BY A CENTER SHALL
26 COMPLETE TRAINING THAT MEETS OR EXCEEDS THE FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT
27 CENTER COUNSELOR TRAINING STANDARDS DEVELOPED BY THE CITIES FOR
28 FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT FUND.

1 **1-504.**

2 **FOR FISCAL YEARS 2028 AND 2029, THE GOVERNOR SHALL INCLUDE IN THE**
3 **ANNUAL BUDGET BILL AN APPROPRIATION TO THE COMPTROLLER IN AN AMOUNT**
4 **SUFFICIENT TO COVER THE COSTS OF THE PILOT PROGRAM.**

5 **1-505.**

6 **THE COMPTROLLER SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS TO CARRY OUT THIS**
7 **SUBTITLE.**

8 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
9 October 1, 2026. It shall remain effective for a period of 3 years and, at the end of September
10 30, 2029, this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be
11 abrogated and of no further force and effect.

Approved:

Governor.

President of the Senate.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.