

SENATE BILL 653

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6lr1849
CF HB 1180

By: **Senator Kagan**

Introduced and read first time: February 6, 2026

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

Senate action: Adopted

Read second time: February 25, 2026

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **State Board of Architects – Grounds for Discipline – ~~Requirements and~~**
3 **Anonymous Complaints**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring instead of authorizing the State Board of Architects to deny,
5 reprimand, or suspend a license to practice architecture or a permit to operate a
6 business through which an individual may practice architecture under certain
7 circumstances; providing that the Board may deny, reprimand, or suspend a certain
8 license or permit if a certain individual fraudulently misrepresents that the
9 individual holds a certain license or permit; requiring the Board to notify certain
10 county code officials if a license is suspended or revoked; authorizing the Board to
11 establish an electronic portal to allow the anonymous reporting of a suspected
12 violation of certain provisions of law relating to the practicing of architecture;
13 requiring a code official to verify a licensee's credentials; and generally relating to
14 the State Board of Architects.

15 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
16 Article – Business Occupations and Professions
17 Section 3–208.1
18 Annotated Code of Maryland
19 (2018 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

20 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
21 Article – Business Occupations and Professions
22 Section 3–311
23 Annotated Code of Maryland

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.



(2018 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

BY adding to

Article – Business Occupations and Professions

Section 3–502

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2018 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

BY adding to

Article – Local Government

Section 13–908

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2013 Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

Article – Business Occupations and Professions

3–208.1.

(a) In this section, “code official” means a public official responsible for the review of building permit documents or the issuance of building permits.

(b) The Board shall:

(1) keep a list of the names and mailing addresses of all licensees;

(2) provide each code official with a copy of the list annually; and

(3) provide any other person who makes a request with a copy of the list at a reasonable fee set by the Board.

(c) (1) The Board shall provide all licensees and code officials with a periodic newsletter not less than semiannually on the activities of the Board.

(2) The Board shall publish, on the Department website, the newsletter jointly with the State Board for Professional Engineers, the State Board of Certified Interior Designers, the State Board of Examiners of Landscape Architects, and the State Board for Professional Land Surveyors.

(d) The Board shall distribute:

(1) to each applicant for a license and each code official, a copy of the Maryland Architects Act and the Board’s rules and regulations;

1 (2) on each renewal of a license, to each licensee, a copy of any amendments
2 to the Maryland Architects Act and the Board's rules and regulations that took effect during
3 the 2-year period ending on the date of renewal; and

4 (3) to each code official, a copy of any amendments to the Maryland
5 Architects Act and the Board's rules and regulations.

6 (e) A licensee shall designate the licensee's mailing address at the time of
7 issuance of the license and on each renewal of the license.

8 3-311.

9 (a) (1) Subject to the hearing provisions of § 3-313 of this subtitle, the Board,
10 on the affirmative vote of a majority of its authorized membership, [may] **SHALL** deny a
11 license to any applicant, reprimand any licensee, or suspend or revoke a license if:

12 (i) the applicant or licensee fraudulently or deceptively obtains or
13 renews or attempts to obtain or renew a license or permit for the applicant or licensee or
14 for another;

15 (ii) the applicant or licensee fraudulently or deceptively uses a
16 license, **OR MISREPRESENTS THAT THE INDIVIDUAL HOLDS A LICENSE OR A PERMIT;**

17 (iii) the applicant or licensee is guilty of any fraud, gross negligence,
18 incompetence, or misconduct while practicing architecture;

19 (iv) the applicant or licensee violates any regulation adopted by the
20 Board;

21 (v) the applicant or licensee violates any provision of this title;

22 (vi) the applicant or licensee aids or abets an unauthorized person to
23 practice architecture;

24 (vii) under the laws of the United States or of any state, the applicant
25 or licensee is convicted of:

26 1. a felony; or

27 2. a misdemeanor that is directly related to the fitness and
28 qualification of the applicant or licensee to practice architecture; or

29 (viii) the applicant or licensee has had a license to practice
30 architecture in another state revoked or suspended for grounds that would justify
31 revocation or suspension of a license under this title, except for failure to pay a license fee.

1 (2) (i) Instead of or in addition to reprimanding the licensee or
2 suspending or revoking a license under this subsection, the Board may impose a penalty
3 not exceeding \$5,000 for each violation.

4 (ii) To determine the amount of the penalty imposed under this
5 subsection, the Board shall consider:

- 6 1. the seriousness of the violation;
- 7 2. the harm caused by the violation;
- 8 3. the good faith of the licensee; and
- 9 4. any history of previous violations by the licensee.

10 (3) The Board shall pay any penalty collected under this subsection into
11 the General Fund of the State.

12 (b) The Board shall consider the following facts in the granting, denial, renewal,
13 suspension, or revocation of a license or the reprimand of a licensee when an applicant or
14 licensee is convicted of a felony or misdemeanor described in subsection (a)(1)(vii) of this
15 section:

16 (1) the nature of the crime;

17 (2) the relationship of the crime to the activities authorized by the license;

18 (3) with respect to a felony, the relevance of the conviction to the fitness
19 and qualification of the applicant or licensee to practice architecture;

20 (4) the length of time since the conviction; and

21 (5) the behavior and activities of the applicant or licensee before and after
22 the conviction.

23 **(C) IF THE BOARD SUSPENDS OR REVOKES A LICENSE UNDER SUBSECTION**
24 **(A) OF THIS SECTION, THE BOARD SHALL NOTIFY EACH COUNTY'S CODE OFFICIAL**
25 **OF THE SUSPENSION OR REVOCATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 3-208.1 OF THIS**
26 **TITLE.**

27 **3-502.**

28 **THE BOARD MAY ESTABLISH AN ELECTRONIC PORTAL TO ALLOW THE**
29 **ANONYMOUS AND CONFIDENTIAL REPORTING OF A SUSPECTED VIOLATION OF §**
30 **3-601, § 3-602, § 3-603, OR § 3-604 OF THIS TITLE.**

Article – Local Government

13-908.

(A) THIS SECTION APPLIES TO ALL COUNTIES.

(B) ~~WHEN REVIEWING AND APPROVING ARCHITECTURAL DOCUMENTS FOR THE PURPOSE OF COMPLIANCE WITH A BUILDING CODE ADOPTED UNDER THIS SUBTITLE, A CODE OFFICIAL SHALL VERIFY THAT THE SEAL AND LICENSE OF THE ARCHITECT MATCH THE PERSON WHO FILES THE DOCUMENTS WITH THE CODE OFFICIAL~~ A CODE OFFICIAL THAT REVIEWS ARCHITECTURAL DOCUMENTS FOR COMPLIANCE WITH A BUILDING CODE ADOPTED UNDER THIS SUBTITLE SHALL VERIFY WITH THE ARCHITECT WHO SIGNED THE DOCUMENTS THE SEAL AND LICENSE OF THE ARCHITECT BEFORE A PERMIT IS PROCESSED.

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

Approved:

Governor.

President of the Senate.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.