



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

TESTIMONY IN **SUPPORT**

HB726 and HB727

Delegate Sandy Bartlett

Chairman Clippinger, Vice Chairwoman Atterbeary and members of the House Judiciary Committee. House Bill 726 and its companion HB727 are bills that propose an increase in a civil case wherein a party is guaranteed a jury trial upon request.

HB726 is the Constitutional Amendment for Civil Jury Trials and House Bill 727 is the proposed change to the law laid out in Courts and Judicial Proceedings Article 4-402. Currently, in civil cases, the District Court has exclusive jurisdiction in claims for \$5,000.00 or less, and concurrent jurisdiction with the Circuit Courts in claims for an amount above \$5,000.00 but less than \$30,000.00. Jury trials are heard in Circuit Courts. The proposed change in House Bill 727 would provide a request for jury trials where the amount in controversy is more than \$30,000.00. With the change, such jury trials would be heard only in Circuit Court.

Jury trials are expensive. The litigants lose time, expenses as well as time away from work. District Court cases move faster than and generally are not as expensive as Circuit Court cases.

House Bill 726 and House Bill 727 are bipartisan bills. If both chambers pass both bills, it will be the voters who will ultimately agree to the constitutional amendment.

Please vote in favor of House Bill 726 and House Bill 727.