

J. SANDY BARTLETT
Legislative District 32
Anne Arundel County

DEPUTY MAJORITY WHIP

Judiciary Committee

Subcommittees

Civil Law and Procedure

Criminal Law and Procedure

Chair

Anne Arundel County
House Delegation



The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 163
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3370 · 301-858-3370
800-492-7122 Ext. 3370
Sandy.Bartlett@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

FAVORABLE – HB899 and HB902

To: Chairman Clippinger, Vice Chairwoman Atterbeary and Members of the House Judiciary Committee.

House Bill 899 proposes an increase in civil cases wherein a party is guaranteed a jury trial upon request. The companion bill HB902 permits the voters to decide whether they want a constitutional amendment to allow for the increase.

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 held in Circuit Court only. The right to request a jury trial is provided in cases in which the amount in controversy is above \$15,000.00. HB899 increases that amount for jury prayers to \$30,000.00. Jury trials are expensive. The litigants lose time, expenses, and time from work. District Court cases move faster than and generally are not as expensive as Circuit Court cases.

House Bill 899 and House Bill 902 were bipartisan bills last session, and if co-sponsors had been allowed this session, I am certain it would have received bipartisan support again as the posture of the bill is the same as in 2020.

Please vote in favor of House Bill 899 and House Bill 902.