



**Bill No:** HB 693-- Courts - Surcharges and Payment to Special Funds

**Committee:** Judiciary

**Date:** 2/16/22

**Position:** Favorable

The Apartment and Office Building Association of Metropolitan Washington (AOBA) represents members that own or manage more than 23 million square feet of commercial office space and 133,000 apartment rental units in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties.

House Bill 693 increases the surcharge in civil cases to not more than \$85. The bill increases the surcharge fee for summary ejectment from \$8 to not more than \$68, which shall be deposited as follows, \$30 into access to counsel special fund; \$30 into Rental Assistance Special Fund; \$8 into Maryland Legal Services Corporation Fund.

While AOBA does not often support fee increases, the Association is open to appropriate and recoverable fee increases. As such, AOBA supports HB 693 which will provide additional resources to MDEC and ultimately a state rental assistance program while also supporting the Access to Counsel special fund. The revenue generated will reinforce state priorities and the bill provides balance by allowing the court to determine who is responsible for court costs.

**For these reasons AOBA requests a favorable report on HB 693.**

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