

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF WORCESTER COUNTY, MARYLAND

BILL 19-5

BY: Commissioners Bunting, Church, Elder, Mitrecic, Nordstrom and Purnell
INTRODUCED: July 16, 2019

A BILL ENTITLED

AN ACT Concerning

Taxation and Revenue - Hotel Rental Tax

For the purpose of amending the Taxation and Revenue Article to update the language with regard to rental units and with reference to State Law, to extend the term of occupancy for which room tax applies, and to make certain stylistic changes with regard to language.

Section 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF WORCESTER COUNTY, MARYLAND, that Title I, Subtitle VI of the Taxation and Revenue Article of the Code of Public Local Laws of Worcester County, Maryland be repealed and reenacted to read as follows:

SUBTITLE VI
Hotel Rental Tax

§ TR 1-601. General provisions.

- (a) Imposition and rate. The Board of County Commissioners of Worcester County may impose a tax within every resort area within the County on the amount paid for room or building rental by or for any transient at any hotel or motel, at any house, townhouse, apartment, condominium unit, cottage, cabin, manufactured home, rooming house, recreational vehicle, recreational park model or other tourist home, or any other building or structure or portion thereof used as a place of lodging. This tax, if imposed, shall be at the rate as a per centum of the room or building rental as the Board may, by resolution after public notice and hearing, determine, but not to be imposed at a rate in excess of five percent (5.0%). Any resolution establishing a rate in excess of three percent shall require the unanimous consent of all of the County Commissioners. The notice of public hearing shall be advertised at least twice in at least one newspaper of general circulation in the County, with the first such notice appearing not less than ten days prior to the date of such hearing and shall state the possible rates that may be set and the date, time and place of the hearing.
- (b) Definitions. In this section, the following words and phrases shall have the meaning indicated, unless the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

HOTEL, MOTEL, APARTMENT, COTTAGE OR SIMILAR PLACE -- Any hotel or motel, any public or private house, townhouse, apartment, condominium unit, cottage, cabin, rooming house, manufactured home, recreational vehicle, recreational park model, or other tourist home or house, or any other building or structure or portion thereof, or other similar lodging place offering sleeping accommodations or space for one or more persons at any time, where the owner or operator thereof provides or offers to provide such sleeping accommodations or space to any transient in return for compensation of any kind.

PERSON -- Any individual, corporation, company, association, firm, partnership or any group of individuals acting as a unit and includes any trustee, receiver, assignee or personal representative thereof.

RESORT AREA -- Any portion or portions of the County, as specified by the Board of County Commissioners from time to time, which, by reason of natural, scenic or man-made attractions or development, has or have an unusual influx of visitors, sojourners and temporary residents and which, by reason of the influx, requires municipal services in unusual number or magnitude. The term specifically includes but is not necessarily limited to the Tenth Election District of the County, as it existed on January 1, 1971.

ROOM OR BUILDING RENTAL -- The total charge for any monetary compensation or the fair market value of any non-monetary compensation received by the owner, operator or resident agent of any house, townhouse, apartment, condominium unit, cottage, cabin, manufactured home, rooming house, recreational vehicle, recreational park model, hotel or motel room, or any other building or structure or portion thereof as a place of sleeping accommodations or space provided to a transient. If the charge includes any amount for services or accommodations in addition to that of the use of sleeping space, the portion of the total charge which represents only "room or building rental" shall be distinctly set out and billed to the transient as a separate item.

TRANSIENT -- Any person who, for any period of less than four consecutive months, obtains sleeping accommodations or space, either at his own expense or at the expense of another, in any house, townhouse, apartment, condominium unit, cottage, cabin, manufactured home, rooming house, recreational vehicle, recreational park model, hotel or motel room, or any other building or structure or portion thereof as sleeping accommodations.

- (c) Collection. Every person receiving any payment for room or building rental on which a tax is levied under this section shall collect the amount of tax imposed from the transient or person on whom it is levied or from the person paying for the room or building rental at the time payment is made. The taxes required to be collected hereunder shall be deemed held in trust by the person required to collect them until remitted as hereinafter required.
- (d) Reports and remittances. The person collecting the tax shall complete a report, upon forms and setting forth information the County Commissioners prescribe and require, showing the amount of room or building rental charges that have been collected and the tax required to be collected and he shall sign and deliver the report to the Board of County Commissioners with a remittance of the tax required hereunder. The reports and remittances shall be made on or before the 21st day of each month, covering the sales and the amount of tax collected during the preceding calendar month. If the reports and remittances are mailed to the Board of County Commissioners, a postmark on the 18th day of the month is deemed to be evidence of timely payment.
- (e) Failure to report and remit. If any person fails or refuses to remit to the Board of County Commissioners the tax required to be collected and paid under this section and/or file the required report within the time and in the amount specified in this section, there shall be added to the tax by the Board of County Commissioners interest at the rate of one-half percent per month on the unpaid tax for each month or portion thereof from the date upon which the tax is due, as provided in this section. If the tax remains delinquent and unpaid for a period of one month from the date it is due and payable, there shall be added thereto by the Board of County Commissioners a penalty of ten percent of the unpaid tax. The Board of County Commissioners

may proceed to collect delinquent and unpaid taxes by suit or distraint.

- (1) The County Commissioners may institute injunctive, mandamus or other appropriate proceedings of law to correct violations of this Subtitle. Any court of competent jurisdiction shall have the right to issue temporary or permanent restraining orders, injunctions or mandamus, or other appropriate forms of relief.
- (2) Delinquent and unpaid taxes shall become a lien upon the real property of the person or entity from whom they are due and shall be collectible in the same manner as real estate taxes assessed against any such property.

(f) Distribution of proceeds.

- (1) From the total proceeds collected from the tax by the Board of County Commissioners from time to time from any house, townhouse, apartment, condominium unit, cottage, cabin, manufactured home, rooming house, recreational vehicle, recreational park model, hotel or motel room, or any other building or structure or portion thereof used as sleeping accommodations:
 - A. The Board of County Commissioners shall deduct a reasonable sum or percentage for the cost of imposing and collecting the tax and credit this deduction to the general funds of the County.
 - B. That portion of the remainder of the total proceeds which came from payments made for any house, townhouse, apartment, condominium unit, cottage, cabin, manufactured home, rooming house, recreational vehicle, recreational park model, hotel or motel room, or any other building or structure or portion thereof used as sleeping accommodations located in whole or in part within the corporate limits of a municipal corporation in a resort area within the County shall be paid over, without qualification or condition, to the Mayor and City Council, by whatever name known, of the municipal corporation.
 - C. The remaining portion of the total proceeds shall be credited to the general funds of the County.
- (2) Distribution of these several payments shall be made periodically by the Board of County Commissioners, not less than fifteen days nor more than thirty days following the last day of each month during the year.

(g) State administrative fee. The Retail Sales Tax Division of the Comptroller's Office shall supply to the Board of County Commissioners information in aid of verification of liability for the tax. The Retail Sales Tax Division may make a reasonable charge for this assistance, which shall be paid by the Board of County Commissioners and treated as a part of the reasonable costs of collecting the tax.

(h) Amendments to laws and procedures. The Board of County Commissioners may promulgate and from time to time change or repeal rules and regulations not inconsistent with this section and deemed necessary to provide for an orderly, systematic and thorough collection and distribution of the tax imposed in this section. As applicable, the laws and the regulations in effect as to the sales and use tax in Maryland shall be adopted and followed by the Board of County

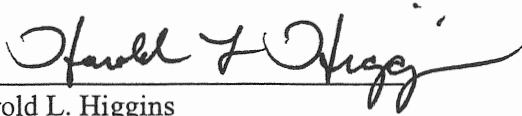
Commissioners in promulgating or changing a rule or regulation.

- (i) Surety bond of Treasurer. The surety bond of the Treasurer of the County may be increased by the Board of County Commissioners in relation to the moneys collected and distributed under this section. The premium for any increase in the surety bond shall be deemed part of the cost of imposing and collecting the tax imposed in this section.
- (j) Processing fee retained by remitter. The person collecting the tax may apply and credit against the amount of tax payable by him an amount equal to one and five-tenths percent of the gross tax to be remitted by him to the Board of County Commissioners to cover his expense in the collection and remittance of the tax. However, nothing in this subsection applies to any person who fails or refuses to file his return with the Board of County Commissioners within the time prescribed within this section.
- (k) Bond.
 - (1) The Board of County Commissioners, in order to protect the revenues to be obtained under this section, may require any person collecting the tax to file with the Board a surety bond issued by a surety company authorized to do business in this state and approved by the State Insurance Commissioner as to solvency and responsibility, in such amount or amounts from time to time as the Board of County Commissioners may fix, to secure the payment of the tax due or which may become due from the person collecting the tax. If the Board determines that the person is to file such a bond, the Board shall give notice to the person to that effect, specifying the amount of bond required. The person collecting the tax shall file the bond within five days after receiving the notice unless, within that period, the person requests, in writing, a hearing before the Board, at which hearing the necessity, propriety and amount of the bond shall be determined by the Board of County Commissioners. This determination is final and shall be complied with within fifteen days after the person collecting the tax receives notice thereof.
 - (2) In lieu of the bond required by Subsection (k)(1) herein, securities approved by the Board of County Commissioners or cash in such amount as the Board prescribes may be deposited, which shall be kept in the custody of the Board. The Board, at any time, without notice to the depositor of the securities or cash, may apply them to any tax due, and for that purpose the securities may be sold by the Board at public or private sale without notice to the depositor of the securities.
- (l) Applicability. The procedures under Title 20, Subtitle 4 (Hotel Rental Taxes), of the Local Government Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, as from time to time amended, shall apply to this section.


Section 2. BE IT FURTHER ENACTED BY THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF WORCESTER COUNTY, MARYLAND, that this Bill shall take January 1, 2020.

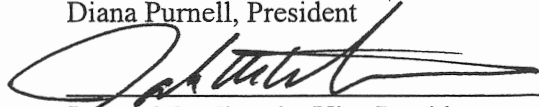
PASSED this 20th day of August, 2019.

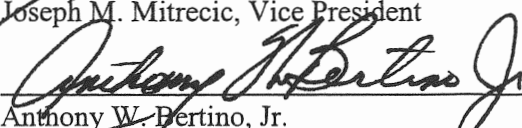
ATTEST:

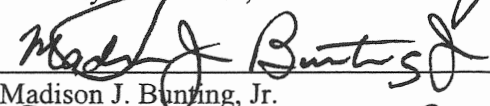

Harold L. Higgins
Chief Administrative Officer

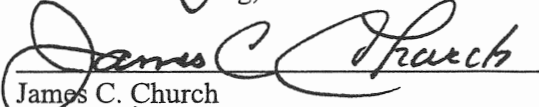
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
WORCESTER COUNTY, MARYLAND



Diana Purnell, President



Joseph M. Mitrecic, Vice President


Anthony W. Bertino, Jr.


Madison J. Bunting, Jr.


James C. Church


Theodore J. Elder


Joshua C. Nordstrom