

HOUSE BILL 764

J1, D4
HB 816/14 – HGO

7lr2310
CF 7lr1123

By: **Delegate West**

Introduced and read first time: February 3, 2017

Assigned to: Health and Government Operations

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Requirements for Filial Support – Repeal**

3 FOR the purpose of repealing the prohibition on the neglect or refusal, by an adult child
4 who has or is able to earn sufficient means, to provide a destitute parent with food,
5 shelter, care, and clothing; repealing the authority of an individual to make a certain
6 complaint relating to the neglect or refusal of a certain adult child to provide a
7 destitute parent with necessary food, shelter, care, and clothing; repealing the
8 authority of the State’s Attorney to file a certain information relating to certain
9 nonsupport of a destitute parent; repealing a requirement that a court order a certain
10 individual to pay support to the individual’s destitute parent under certain
11 circumstances; repealing a requirement that a certain individual pay certain support
12 until a certain occurrence; repealing the authority of a court to order payment of
13 certain forfeited recognizance to a destitute parent or certain agency under certain
14 circumstances; repealing the authority of a court to release a certain individual and
15 a certain surety from the terms of a certain order, bond, or recognizance under
16 certain circumstances; altering the definition of “responsible relative”, as it relates
17 to responsibility for the cost of certain services provided in a facility or program
18 operated or funded by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, to exclude
19 from the definition the children of a recipient of certain services; repealing a certain
20 definition; making conforming changes; and generally relating to the repeal of laws
21 requiring filial support and financial responsibility.

22 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
23 Article – Family Law
24 Section 13–101 through 13–103 and 13–106 through 13–109
25 Annotated Code of Maryland
26 (2012 Replacement Volume and 2016 Supplement)

27 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
28 Article – Health – General
29 Section 16–101(a) and (c) and 16–102

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 Annotated Code of Maryland
2 (2015 Replacement Volume and 2016 Supplement)

3 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
4 Article – Health – General
5 Section 16–101(f) and 16–203(a)
6 Annotated Code of Maryland
7 (2015 Replacement Volume and 2016 Supplement)

8 Preamble

9 WHEREAS, Filial support laws have their origins in the Elizabethan Poor Laws, and
10 nearly all states had them at one time; and

11 WHEREAS, States began repealing the laws after the passage of social insurance
12 statutes, including Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid; and

13 WHEREAS, In Maryland, children may still be held responsible for their parents'
14 expenses without any contractual agreement to be held liable; and

15 WHEREAS, Parents are able to incur bills and expenses without their children
16 having a say, but when the bill comes due, the children may be legally responsible for
17 payment; and

18 WHEREAS, Under Title 16, Subtitles 1 and 2 of the Health – General Article of the
19 Annotated Code of Maryland, Maryland's filial law that relates to recipients of services in
20 a facility or program operated or funded by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene,
21 when a parent is under the care of a State psychiatric hospital and is under age 65, children
22 may be required to reimburse the State for the parent's care out of their monthly income,
23 leaving the children with a bare monthly allowance; and

24 WHEREAS, Current Maryland law requires adult children to pay for food, shelter,
25 care, and clothing for a destitute parent even though the children are unable to control
26 what expenses their parents incur; and

27 WHEREAS, Adult children may be held liable for medical expenses of an indigent
28 parent even though the children have no control over the parent's finances; and

29 WHEREAS, Children are unable to compel a parent to purchase long-term care
30 insurance or to save for future expenses; and

31 WHEREAS, A parent's failure to exercise sound financial discretion should not result
32 in a burden on the parent's children; now, therefore,

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

Article – Family Law

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13–101.

[(a)] In this title [the following words have the meanings indicated.

(b) “Destitute adult child”], “**DESTITUTE ADULT CHILD**” means an adult child who:

(1) has no means of subsistence; and

(2) cannot be self-supporting, due to mental or physical infirmity.

[(c)] “Destitute parent” means a parent who:

(1) has no means of subsistence; and

(2) cannot be self-supporting, due to old age or mental or physical infirmity.]

13–102.

(a) [If a destitute parent is in this State and has an adult child who has or is able to earn sufficient means, the adult child may not neglect or refuse to provide the destitute parent with food, shelter, care, and clothing.

(b)] If a destitute adult child is in this State and has a parent who has or is able to earn sufficient means, the parent may not neglect or refuse to provide the destitute adult child with food, shelter, care, and clothing.

[(c)] **(B)** A person who violates [any provision of] this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to a fine not exceeding \$1,000 or imprisonment not exceeding 1 year, or both.

13–103.

(a) A complaint under this section shall be made under oath in writing to a State’s Attorney.

(b) [An individual may make a complaint that states that:

(1) the individual is a destitute parent;

(2) an adult child of the destitute parent has or is able to earn means sufficient to provide the destitute parent with necessary food, shelter, care, and clothing; and

1 (3) the adult child has neglected or refused to provide the destitute parent
2 with necessary food, shelter, care, and clothing.

3 (c)] An individual may make a complaint that states that:

4 (1) the individual is a destitute adult child;

5 (2) a parent of the destitute adult child has or is able to earn means
6 sufficient to provide the destitute adult child with necessary food, shelter, care, and
7 clothing; and

8 (3) the parent has neglected or refused to provide the destitute adult child
9 with necessary food, shelter, care, and clothing.

10 13–106.

11 (a) The State’s Attorney may file an information that charges the accused
12 individual with nonsupport of the individual’s [destitute parent or] destitute adult child,
13 based on the complaint.

14 (b) After filing an information, the State’s Attorney may seek to obtain the
15 consent of the accused individual to the entry of a court order under § 13–107 of this title.

16 13–107.

17 (a) With the written consent of the accused individual before charging or trial, or
18 on conviction of the individual under this subtitle, the court shall order the individual:

19 (1) to pay support:

20 (i) to the individual’s [destitute parent or] destitute adult child; or

21 (ii) if the [destitute parent or] destitute adult child is a public charge
22 to the agency that is authorized by law to receive these payments; and

23 (2) to give a bond with securities to this State, conditioned on compliance
24 with the court’s order and any modification of the order.

25 (b) In determining the amount of support, the court shall consider the financial
26 circumstances of the individual.

27 (c) The individual shall pay the support until the [destitute parent or] destitute
28 adult child has other means of adequate support or dies.

29 (d) The court may modify the order.

1 13–108.

2 (a) An individual who fails to give bond after being ordered to give bond under §
3 13–107 of this title is subject to imprisonment until bond is given, not exceeding 1 year.

4 (b) In consideration of the financial circumstances of the accused individual, and
5 on the individual's entering into a recognizance, the court may:

6 (1) suspend imposition of the sentence for failure to give bond; and

7 (2) place the individual on probation for the period that the individual is
8 required to pay support.

9 (c) The recognizance ordered by the court shall be:

10 (1) in the amount that the court directs, with or without security; and

11 (2) on the conditions that:

12 (i) if the individual is summoned to appear before the court, the
13 individual shall appear; and

14 (ii) the individual shall pay support as ordered by the court.

15 (d) If an individual fails to pay support under the court's order, the court may
16 revoke the probation and impose the sentence for failure to give bond.

17 (e) The court may order that any forfeited recognizance be paid:

18 (1) to the individual's [destitute parent or] destitute adult child; or

19 (2) if the individual's [destitute parent or] destitute adult child is a public
20 charge, to the agency that is authorized by law to receive the forfeited recognizance.

21 13–109.

22 The court shall release an individual who is ordered to pay support under this
23 subtitle and any sureties of that individual from the terms of any court order, bond, or
24 recognizance under this subtitle if:

25 (1) the individual or the individual's [destitute parent or] destitute adult
26 child dies;

27 (2) the individual's [destitute parent or] destitute adult child becomes
28 self-supporting; or

1 (3) the individual becomes unable to earn or loses possession of means
2 sufficient to provide for the individual's [destitute parent or] destitute adult child.

3 **Article – Health – General**

4 16–101.

5 (a) In this title the following words have the meanings indicated.

6 (c) “Chargeable person” means:

7 (1) Any responsible relative;

8 (2) Except for a recipient of services, any other person who is legally
9 responsible for the care of the individual; and

10 (3) Any person who maintains a policy of health insurance under which a
11 recipient of services is insured.

12 (f) “Responsible relative” means:

13 (1) The spouse of a recipient of services; **AND**

14 (2) The parents of a recipient of services who is a minor[; and

15 (3) The children of a recipient of services].

16 16–102.

17 (a) It is the policy of this State to obligate each recipient of services and, to the
18 extent provided in this title, those legally responsible for the recipient to pay, if financially
19 able, for the cost of care that is received by the recipient of services. Unless otherwise
20 provided by statute, the recipient of services and the chargeable person shall be responsible
21 for payment regardless of whether the recipient of services was admitted voluntarily,
22 involuntarily, or by court order. If the recipient of services is involuntarily admitted to a
23 public facility and released after evaluation, for failure to meet the standards for
24 involuntary commitment, the recipient of services or chargeable person shall not be
25 responsible for the cost of care.

26 (b) The total cost of care of each recipient of services is, in the first instance, the
27 responsibility of the recipient of services and, as provided in this title, the chargeable
28 person. Any uncollectible costs for services provided to the recipient shall become the
29 responsibility of this State.

30 16–203.

1 (a) (1) The cost of care of a recipient of services shall be determined in
2 accordance with the charges for services set under § 16–201 of this subtitle.

3 (2) Except as otherwise provided in this title:

4 (i) Payment for this cost of care shall be made by the recipient of
5 services or a chargeable person;

6 (ii) Their liability for this payment is joint and several; and

7 (iii) The insured or policyholder may not withhold the payment and
8 shall assign to the Department any benefits available under the policy for services rendered
9 by the Department to any insured covered by the policy.

10 (3) Liability may not be imposed under this title on any spouse [or child]
11 of a recipient of services, if the spouse [or child] has been abandoned by the recipient of
12 services. The Department shall adopt rules and regulations that define abandonment for
13 the purposes of this subsection.

14 (4) Liability may not be imposed under this title on a responsible relative
15 if any responsible relative has been the victim of sexual abuse, physical abuse, or a crime
16 of violence as defined in § 14–101 of the Criminal Law Article perpetrated by the recipient
17 of services. The Department shall adopt regulations that define “sexual abuse, physical
18 abuse, or a crime of violence” as defined in § 14–101 of the Criminal Law Article for the
19 purposes of this paragraph.

20 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
21 October 1, 2017.