

SENATE BILL 827

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4lr2685
CF HB 1079

By: **Senator Smith**

Introduced and read first time: February 2, 2024

Assigned to: Judicial Proceedings

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

Senate action: Adopted

Read second time: February 27, 2024

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Courts and Judicial Proceedings – Jury Examination and Workgroup to Study**
3 **the Voir Dire Process**

4 FOR the purpose of specifying the purpose of jury examination in any State court;
5 establishing the Workgroup to Study the Voir Dire Process; and generally relating
6 to juries.

7 BY adding to

8 Article – Courts and Judicial Proceedings

9 Section 8–423

10 Annotated Code of Maryland

11 (2020 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

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

14 **Article – Courts and Judicial Proceedings**

15 **8–423.**

16 (A) **THIS SECTION APPLIES TO ALL JURY TRIALS IN ANY STATE COURT.**

17 (B) **THE PURPOSE OF JURY EXAMINATION ~~SHALL BE~~ IS TO:**

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 **(1) IDENTIFY AND REMOVE PROSPECTIVE JURORS WHO ARE UNABLE**
2 **TO SERVE FAIRLY AND IMPARTIALLY; AND**

3 **(2) ALLOW THE PARTIES TO OBTAIN INFORMATION THAT MAY**
4 **PROVIDE GUIDANCE FOR THE USE OF PEREMPTORY CHALLENGES AND CHALLENGES**
5 **FOR CAUSE.**

6 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

7 (a) There is a Workgroup to Study the Voir Dire Process.

8 (b) The Workgroup consists of the following members:

9 (1) one member of the Senate, appointed by the President of the Senate;

10 (2) one member of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of the
11 House;

12 (3) the Attorney General of Maryland;

13 (4) the Chief Justice of the Maryland Supreme Court;

14 (5) two members appointed by the Chief Justice of the Maryland Supreme
15 Court; and

16 (6) two members appointed by the Attorney General.

17 (c) The Workgroup members shall elect the chair of the Workgroup.

18 (d) The Department of Legislative Services, the Judiciary, and the Office of the
19 Attorney General shall provide staff for the Workgroup.

20 (e) A member of the Workgroup:

21 (1) may not receive compensation as a member of the Workgroup; but

22 (2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State
23 Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

24 (f) The Workgroup shall study the voir dire process and make findings and
25 recommendations.

26 (g) On or before June 30, 2025, the Workgroup shall report its findings and
27 recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State
28 Government Article, the General Assembly.

1 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That Section 1 of this Act shall take
2 effect October 1, 2024.

3 SECTION ~~2~~ 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, except as provided in
4 Section 3 of this Act, this Act shall take effect ~~October~~ July 1, 2024. Section 2 of this Act
5 shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and, at the end of June 30, 2025, Section 2 of
6 this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and
7 of no further force and effect.

Approved:

Governor.

President of the Senate.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.