

nominated by petitions signed by three percent of the registered voters of the county or by two thousand registered voters, whichever is the lesser number, delivered to the board of county commissioners within sixty days after the charter board is appointed, the board of county commissioners shall call a special election not less than thirty or more than ninety days after receiving petitions, unless a regular election falls within the designated period. The appointees of the board of county commissioners and those nominated by petitions shall be placed on the ballot in alphabetical order without party designation. The voters may cast votes for, and elect a number of nominees equal to the number of charter board members originally selected by the board of county commissioners, and those so elected are the charter board. The charter board, within twelve months from the date of its appointment, or if there was an election for some of its members, within twelve months from the date of the election, shall present a proposed charter for the county to the board of county commissioners, which shall publish it at least twice in one or more newspapers of general circulation in the county within thirty days after it is presented. The charter shall be submitted to the voters of the county at a special or regular election held not earlier than thirty days or later than ninety days after publication of the charter. If a majority of the votes cast for and against the adoption of the charter are in favor of its adoption, the charter shall become effective as the charter of the county on the thirtieth day after the election or such later date as shall be specified in the charter.

SEC. 2. ¹⁷⁶ The General Assembly shall by public general law provide a grant of express powers for such County or Counties as may thereafter form a charter under the provisions of this Article. Such express powers granted to the Counties and the powers heretofore granted to the City of Baltimore, as set forth in Article 4, Section 6, Public Local Laws of Maryland, shall not be enlarged or extended by any charter formed under the provisions of this Article, but such powers may be extended, modified, amended or repealed by the General Assembly.

SEC. 3. ¹⁷⁷ Every charter so formed shall provide for an elective legislative body in which shall be vested the lawmaking power of said City or County. Such legislative body in the City of Baltimore shall be known as the City Council of the City of Baltimore, and in any county shall be known as the County Council of the County. The chief executive officer, if any such charter shall provide for the election of such executive officer, or the presiding officer of said legislative body, if such charter shall not provide for the election of a chief executive officer, shall be known in the City of Baltimore as Mayor of Baltimore, and in any County as the President or Chairman of the County Council of the County, and all references in the Constitution and laws of this State to the Mayor of Baltimore and City Council of the City of Baltimore or to the County Commissioners of the Counties, shall be construed to refer to the Mayor of Baltimore and City Council of the City of Baltimore and to the President or Chairman and County Council herein provided for whenever such construction would be reasonable. From and after the adoption of a charter by the City of Baltimore, or any County of this State, as hereinbefore provided, the Mayor of Baltimore and City Council of the City of Baltimore or the County Council of said County, subject to the Constitution and Public General Laws of this State, shall have full power to enact local laws of said City or County including the power to repeal or amend local laws of said City or County enacted by the General Assembly, upon all matters covered by the express powers granted as above provided; provided that nothing herein contained shall be construed to authorize or empower the County Council of any

County in this State to enact laws or regulations for any incorporated town, village, or municipality in said County, on any matter covered by the powers granted to said town, village, or municipality by the Act incorporating it, or any subsequent Act or Acts amendatory thereto. Provided, however, that the charters for the various Counties shall specify the number of days, not to exceed forty-five, which may but need not be consecutive, that the County Council of the Counties may sit in each year for the purpose of enacting legislation for such Counties, and all legislation shall be enacted at the times so designated for that purpose in the charter, and the title or a summary of all laws and ordinances proposed shall be published once a week for two successive weeks prior to enactment followed by publication once after enactment in at least one newspaper of general circulation in the county, so that the taxpayers and citizens may have notice thereof. The validity of emergency legislation shall not be affected if enacted prior to the completion of advertising thereof. These provisions concerning publication shall not apply to Baltimore City. All such local laws enacted by the Mayor of Baltimore and City Council of the City of Baltimore or the Council of the Counties as hereinbefore provided, shall be subject to the same rules of interpretation as those now applicable to the Public Local Laws of this State, except that in case of any conflict between said local law and any Public General Law now or hereafter enacted the Public General Law shall control.

SEC. 3A. ¹⁷⁸ The charter for the government of any county governed by the provisions of this Article may provide for the election of members of the county council by the voters of councilmanic districts therein established, or by the voters of the entire county, or by a combination of these methods of election.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this Constitution, the charter for the government of Harford County under the provisions of this Article, either as adopted, or by amendment, shall provide for the election of members of the county council by the voters of the entire county.

SEC. 4. From and after the adoption of a charter under the provisions of this Article by the City of Baltimore or any County of this State, no public local law shall be enacted by the General Assembly for said City or County on any subject covered by the express powers granted as above provided. Any law so drawn as to apply to two or more of the geographical subdivisions of this State shall not be deemed a Local Law, within the meaning of this Act. The term "geographical sub-division" herein used shall be taken to mean the City of Baltimore or any of the Counties of this State.

SEC. 5. ¹⁷⁹ Amendments to any charter adopted by the City of Baltimore or by any County of this State under the provisions of this Article may be proposed by a resolution of the Mayor of Baltimore and the City Council of the City of Baltimore, or the Council of the County, or by a petition signed by not less than 20% of the registered voters of the City or County, provided, however, that in any case 10,000 signatures shall be sufficient to complete a petition. A petition shall be filed with the Mayor of Baltimore or the President of the County Council. An amendment so proposed shall be submitted to the voters of the City or County at the next general or congressional election occurring after the passage of the resolution or the filing of the petition. If at the election the majority of the votes cast for and against the amendment shall be in favor thereof, the amendment shall be adopted and become a part of the charter of the City or County from and after the thirtieth day after said election. The amendments shall be published by the Mayor of Baltimore or President

¹⁷⁶Amended by Chapter 681, Acts of 1977, ratified Nov. 7, 1978.

¹⁷⁷Amended by Chapter 557, Acts of 1955, ratified Nov. 6, 1956; Chapter 371, Acts of 1972, ratified Nov. 7, 1972.

¹⁷⁸Amended by Chapter 358, Acts of 1971, ratified Nov. 7, 1972; Chapter 785, Acts of 1975, ratified Nov. 2, 1976; Chapter 682, Acts of 1977, ratified Nov. 7, 1978; Chapter 136, Acts of 1980, ratified Nov. 4, 1980; Chapter 729, Acts of 1982, ratified Nov. 2, 1982; Chapters 694, 707, Acts of 1986, ratified Nov. 4, 1986.

¹⁷⁹Amended by Chapter 681, Acts of 1977, ratified Nov. 7, 1978.