

The Honorable Casper R. Taylor, Jr.  
Speaker of the House  
State House  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Mr. Speaker:

In accordance with Article II, Section 17 of the Maryland Constitution, I have today vetoed House Bill 70 – District Court – Civil Jurisdiction – Dishonored Checks and Other Instruments.

House Bill 70 provides that the District Court of Maryland has exclusive original civil jurisdiction in an action for damages for a dishonored check or other instrument regardless of the amount in controversy. Last year, I vetoed a similar bill, House Bill 356.

Currently, the District Court of Maryland has exclusive original civil jurisdiction in an action for damages that does not exceed \$25,000. The established jurisdictional amounts for our court system are carefully designed to balance the cases considered by the District Court and circuit courts. Maintaining this balance is necessary to protect basic individual rights, effectively apply rules of discovery and reduce the possibility that a disproportionate number of litigants will not be satisfied with their day in court. Any disruption of this balance created by altering or tampering with the current law must be thoroughly supported by substantial evidence. House Bill 70 does not provide the persuasive reasoning necessary to compromise the established jurisdictional amount in controversy to unwarranted changes.

For the reasons stated above, I have vetoed House Bill 70.

Sincerely,  
Parris N. Glendening  
Governor

### House Bill No. 70

AN ACT concerning

### District Court – Civil Jurisdiction – Dishonored Checks and Other Instruments

FOR the purpose of clarifying that the District Court of Maryland has exclusive original civil jurisdiction in an action for certain damages for a dishonored check or other instrument regardless of the amount in controversy; making stylistic changes; providing that in an action for certain damages for a dishonored check or instrument a defendant is entitled to demand a transfer of the action from the District Court to an appropriate circuit court under certain circumstances; and generally relating to the exclusive original civil jurisdiction of the District Court of Maryland.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
Article – Commercial Law