

# HOUSE BILL 953

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CF SB 372

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By: **Delegates Hixson, Afzali, Carr, Cullison, Ebersole, Fennell, Gutierrez,  
C. Howard, Kaiser, Luedtke, Moon, Platt, S. Robinson, and Turner**

Introduced and read first time: February 13, 2015

Assigned to: Ways and Means

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Income Tax – Subtraction Modification – First–Time Homebuyer Savings**  
3 **Accounts**

4 FOR the purpose of allowing a subtraction modification under the Maryland income tax for  
5 a certain amount contributed to a certain first–time homebuyer savings account and  
6 certain earnings on the account; providing that the account holder may claim the  
7 subtraction modification under certain circumstances; providing that certain  
8 transfers of money to or from the account are subject to certain requirements and  
9 limitations; providing that a certain person who transfers money to the account is  
10 not entitled to the subtraction modification; authorizing the account holder to  
11 withdraw and deposit certain money in certain accounts under certain  
12 circumstances; requiring the account holder to use the funds in the account for  
13 certain eligible costs within a certain time period; providing that certain funds  
14 remaining in the account on a certain date shall be subject to taxation as ordinary  
15 income; providing that a certain financial institution may not be held responsible for  
16 certain actions; authorizing a certain financial institution to use certain funds for a  
17 certain purpose; providing that, except under certain circumstances, certain funds  
18 withdrawn from the account for certain purposes shall be taxed as ordinary income  
19 and subject to a certain penalty; requiring a certain account holder claiming the  
20 subtraction modification to submit certain documentation under certain  
21 circumstances; requiring the Comptroller to adopt certain regulations; defining  
22 certain terms; providing for the application of this Act; and generally relating to a  
23 Maryland income tax subtraction modification for certain amounts paid into and  
24 earned on certain first–time homebuyer savings accounts.

25 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,  
26 Article – Tax – General  
27 Section 10–208(a)  
28 Annotated Code of Maryland  
29 (2010 Replacement Volume and 2014 Supplement)

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 BY adding to  
2 Article – Tax – General  
3 Section 10–208(v)  
4 Annotated Code of Maryland  
5 (2010 Replacement Volume and 2014 Supplement)

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

8 **Article – Tax – General**

9 10–208.

10 (a) In addition to the modification under § 10–207 of this subtitle, the amounts  
11 under this section are subtracted from the federal adjusted gross income of a resident to  
12 determine Maryland adjusted gross income.

13 (v) (1) (i) IN THIS SUBSECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE  
14 MEANINGS INDICATED.

15 (ii) “ACCOUNT HOLDER” MEANS AN INDIVIDUAL WHO  
16 ESTABLISHES, INDIVIDUALLY OR JOINTLY WITH ONE OR MORE OTHER INDIVIDUALS,  
17 A FIRST–TIME HOMEBUYER SAVINGS ACCOUNT.

18 (iii) “ALLOWABLE CLOSING COSTS” MEANS A DISBURSEMENT  
19 LISTED ON A SETTLEMENT STATEMENT FOR THE PURCHASE OF A HOME IN THE  
20 STATE BY A QUALIFIED BENEFICIARY.

21 (iv) “ELIGIBLE COSTS” MEANS THE DOWN PAYMENT AND  
22 ALLOWABLE CLOSING COSTS FOR THE PURCHASE OF A HOME IN THE STATE BY A  
23 QUALIFIED BENEFICIARY.

24 (v) “FINANCIAL INSTITUTION” HAS THE MEANING STATED IN §  
25 1–101 OF THE FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS ARTICLE.

26 (vi) “FIRST–TIME HOMEBUYER SAVINGS ACCOUNT” OR  
27 “ACCOUNT” MEANS AN ACCOUNT WITH A FINANCIAL INSTITUTION THAT AN  
28 ACCOUNT HOLDER DESIGNATES AS A FIRST–TIME HOMEBUYER SAVINGS ACCOUNT  
29 ON THE ACCOUNT HOLDER’S MARYLAND TAX RETURN FOR TAX YEAR 2015 OR ANY  
30 FOLLOWING TAXABLE YEAR AND THAT IS ESTABLISHED FOR THE SOLE PURPOSE OF  
31 PAYING OR REIMBURSING ELIGIBLE COSTS FOR THE PURCHASE OF A HOME IN THE  
32 STATE BY A QUALIFIED BENEFICIARY.

1           **(VII) “HOME” MEANS A SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL REAL**  
2 **PROPERTY, INCLUDING A MOBILE HOME AS DEFINED IN § 8A-101(C) OF THE REAL**  
3 **PROPERTY ARTICLE.**

4           **(VIII) “QUALIFIED BENEFICIARY” MEANS AN INDIVIDUAL,**  
5 **INCLUDING AN ACCOUNT HOLDER, WHO PURCHASES A HOME AS A PRINCIPAL**  
6 **RESIDENCE IN THE STATE WHO:**

7                   **1. HAS NOT OWNED OR PURCHASED, EITHER**  
8 **INDIVIDUALLY OR JOINTLY, A HOME IN THE STATE IN THE LAST 7 YEARS; AND**

9                   **2. IS DESIGNATED AS THE BENEFICIARY OF AN ACCOUNT**  
10 **DESIGNATED BY THE ACCOUNT HOLDER AS A FIRST-TIME HOMEBUYER SAVINGS**  
11 **ACCOUNT.**

12           **(IX) “SETTLEMENT STATEMENT” MEANS THE STATEMENT OF**  
13 **RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS FOR A TRANSACTION RELATED TO REAL ESTATE,**  
14 **INCLUDING A STATEMENT PRESCRIBED UNDER THE REAL ESTATE SETTLEMENT**  
15 **PROCEDURES ACT OF 1974, 12 U.S.C. § 2601 ET SEQ., AS AMENDED, AND**  
16 **ASSOCIATED REGULATIONS.**

17           **(2) (I) EXCEPT AS OTHERWISE PROVIDED IN THIS SUBSECTION**  
18 **AND SUBJECT TO THE LIMITATIONS UNDER THIS PARAGRAPH, THE SUBTRACTION**  
19 **UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION INCLUDES:**

20                   **1. UP TO \$5,000 OF THE AMOUNT CONTRIBUTED BY AN**  
21 **ACCOUNT HOLDER TO A FIRST-TIME HOMEBUYER SAVINGS ACCOUNT DURING THE**  
22 **TAXABLE YEAR; AND**

23                   **2. THE EARNINGS, INCLUDING INTEREST AND OTHER**  
24 **INCOME ON THE PRINCIPAL, FROM THE ACCOUNT DURING THE TAXABLE YEAR.**

25           **(II) AN ACCOUNT HOLDER MAY CLAIM A SUBTRACTION UNDER**  
26 **THIS SUBSECTION:**

27                   **1. FOR A PERIOD NOT TO EXCEED 10 YEARS;**

28                   **2. FOR TOTAL EARNINGS NOT TO EXCEED \$50,000**  
29 **DURING THAT 10-YEAR PERIOD; AND**

30                   **3. EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH (5) OF THIS**  
31 **SUBSECTION, ONLY IF THE PRINCIPAL AND EARNINGS OF THE ACCOUNT REMAIN IN**

1 THE ACCOUNT UNTIL A WITHDRAWAL IS MADE FOR ELIGIBLE COSTS RELATED TO  
2 THE PURCHASE OF A HOME BY A QUALIFIED BENEFICIARY.

3 (3) A TRANSFER OF MONEY INTO OR FROM THE ACCOUNT BY A  
4 PERSON OTHER THAN THE ACCOUNT HOLDER TO THE ACCOUNT IS SUBJECT TO THE  
5 REQUIREMENTS AND LIMITATIONS PROVIDED UNDER THIS SUBSECTION.

6 (4) A PERSON OTHER THAN AN ACCOUNT HOLDER WHO TRANSFERS  
7 MONEY TO THE ACCOUNT IS NOT ENTITLED TO THE SUBTRACTION UNDER THIS  
8 SUBSECTION.

9 (5) AN ACCOUNT HOLDER MAY WITHDRAW MONEY FROM THE  
10 ACCOUNT AND DEPOSIT THE MONEY IN A NEW FIRST-TIME HOMEBUYER SAVINGS  
11 ACCOUNT HELD BY A DIFFERENT FINANCIAL INSTITUTION OR THE SAME FINANCIAL  
12 INSTITUTION.

13 (6) (I) THE ACCOUNT HOLDER SHALL USE THE FUNDS IN THE  
14 ACCOUNT FOR ELIGIBLE COSTS RELATED TO THE PURCHASE OF A HOME WITHIN 15  
15 YEARS FOLLOWING THE DATE ON WHICH THE ACCOUNT WAS ESTABLISHED.

16 (II) 1. THIS SUBPARAGRAPH DOES NOT APPLY TO ANY  
17 FUNDS IN THE ACCOUNT FOR WHICH A SUBTRACTION HAS NOT BEEN CLAIMED  
18 UNDER THIS SUBSECTION.

19 2. ANY FUNDS IN THE ACCOUNT NOT EXPENDED ON  
20 ELIGIBLE COSTS BY DECEMBER 31 OF THE LAST YEAR OF THE 15-YEAR PERIOD  
21 UNDER SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH SHALL BE SUBJECT TO TAXATION  
22 AS ORDINARY INCOME.

23 (7) THE FINANCIAL INSTITUTION HOLDING THE FIRST-TIME  
24 HOMEBUYER SAVINGS ACCOUNT:

25 (I) MAY NOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR THE USE OR  
26 APPLICATION OF FUNDS DEPOSITED IN OR WITHDRAWN FROM THE ACCOUNT; AND

27 (II) MAY USE FUNDS HELD IN THE ACCOUNT FOR PAYING THE  
28 EXPENSES OF ADMINISTERING THE ACCOUNT.

29 (8) (I) EXCEPT AS AUTHORIZED UNDER PARAGRAPH (5) OF THIS  
30 SUBSECTION OR AS PROVIDED IN SUBPARAGRAPH (II) OF THIS PARAGRAPH, IF THE  
31 ACCOUNT HOLDER WITHDRAWS ANY FUNDS FROM THE ACCOUNT FOR A PURPOSE  
32 OTHER THAN ELIGIBLE COSTS FOR THE PURCHASE OF A HOME:

1                   **1. THOSE FUNDS SHALL BE TAXED AS ORDINARY INCOME**  
2 **OF THE ACCOUNT HOLDER; AND**

3                   **2. THE ACCOUNT HOLDER SHALL PAY A PENALTY TO THE**  
4 **STATE EQUAL TO 10% OF THE AMOUNT WITHDRAWN.**

5                   **(II) A DISBURSEMENT OF ANY ASSETS OF A FIRST-TIME**  
6 **HOMEBUYER SAVINGS ACCOUNT UNDER A FILING BY AN ACCOUNT HOLDER FOR**  
7 **PROTECTION UNDER THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY CODE, 11 U.S.C. §§ 101**  
8 **THROUGH 1330, MAY NOT SUBJECT THE ACCOUNT HOLDER TO TAX LIABILITY.**

9                   **(9) AN ACCOUNT HOLDER CLAIMING A SUBTRACTION UNDER THIS**  
10 **SUBSECTION SHALL:**

11                   **(I) SUBMIT TO THE COMPTROLLER DETAILED INFORMATION**  
12 **REGARDING THE FIRST-TIME HOMEBUYER SAVINGS ACCOUNT WITH THE ACCOUNT**  
13 **HOLDER'S TAX RETURN, INCLUDING A LIST OF TRANSACTIONS FOR THE ACCOUNT**  
14 **DURING THE TAXABLE YEAR; AND**

15                   **(II) ON A WITHDRAWAL OF FUNDS FROM THE ACCOUNT, SUBMIT**  
16 **TO THE COMPTROLLER A DETAILED ACCOUNT OF THE ELIGIBLE COSTS TOWARD**  
17 **WHICH THE ACCOUNT FUNDS WERE APPLIED AND A STATEMENT OF THE AMOUNT OF**  
18 **FUNDS REMAINING IN THE ACCOUNT, IF ANY.**

19                   **(10) THE COMPTROLLER SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS TO CARRY OUT**  
20 **THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SUBSECTION.**

21                   **SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July**  
22 **1, 2015, and shall be applicable to all taxable years beginning after December 31, 2014.**