

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2011 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 505

(St. Mary's County Delegation)

Environmental Matters

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

St. Mary's County - Metropolitan Commission - Public Ethics Law

This bill specifies that each commissioner and employee of the St. Mary's County Metropolitan Commission is a local official subject to St. Mary's County public ethics laws.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: None. The bill does not directly affect St. Mary's County finances.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Counties and municipalities are required, under the Maryland Public Ethics Law, to enact provisions to govern the public ethics of local officials relating to conflicts of interest, financial disclosure, and lobbying. Certain municipalities may be exempted or subject to modified requirements under specified circumstances. The provisions generally must be similar to State public ethics laws, but may be modified to make the provisions relevant to the jurisdiction. A "local official" is generally an official, officer, or employee of a county or municipality that the governing body of the county or municipality determines is subject to the local government's public ethics laws. For certain counties, specific officials are included in the definition of a "local official."

Background: The St. Mary's County Metropolitan Commission is a nonprofit body politic and corporate established under State law to supply water and sewer service to

St. Mary's County. The metropolitan commission is appointed by the St. Mary's County Commissioners.

Because the metropolitan commission is an independent nonprofit corporation and not an agency of the St. Mary's County Government, the commissioners and employees of the St. Mary's County Metropolitan Commission are not considered to be subject to most county or State public ethics laws. The commissioners, however, are subject to financial disclosure requirements under the St. Mary's County Public Ethics Ordinance as a result of being appointees of the county commissioners.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): St. Mary's County, State Ethics Commission, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 10, 2011
ncs/mcr

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