

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2011 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Joint Resolution 8 (Delegate Oaks, *et al.*)
Rules and Executive Nominations

Commission to Rename Mountains in the State

This joint resolution requires the Governor, in consultation with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Maryland Geological Survey (MGS), and Maryland State Archives (MSA), to establish a commission to rename Negro Mountain and Polish Mountain. The commission must inform the Governor, Maryland General Assembly, DNR, MGS, and MSA by December 31, 2011, of the new names selected for the mountains.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Compliance with the joint resolution can be absorbed within existing budgeted resources.

Local Effect: Potential minimal increase in local expenditures to change signs and maps.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Background: Maryland has over 60 mountain ranges and hills, located largely in the western portion of the State.

Negro Mountain is a 30-mile long ridge of the Allegheny Mountains extending from Garrett County, Maryland, north to Somerset County, Pennsylvania. Negro Mountain rises to an elevation of 3,075 feet above sea level. A resolution (House Resolution 77 of 2009) proposing a commission to study the renaming of Negro Mountain and Mount Davis was recently introduced, but not passed, in the General Assembly of Pennsylvania.

Polish Mountain is located in Allegany County, Maryland, and extends northeastward into Pennsylvania. Polish Mountain rises to an elevation of 1,783 feet above sea level.

The U.S. Board on Geographic Names, within the U.S. Geological Survey, was established to maintain uniform geographic name usage throughout the federal government. The board promulgates official geographic feature names with locative attributes as well as principles, policies, and procedures governing the use of domestic names, foreign names, Antarctic names, and undersea feature names. The board serves the federal government and the public as a central authority to which name problems, name inquiries, name changes, and new name proposals can be directed. In partnership with federal, state, and local agencies, the board provides a conduit through which uniform geographic name usage is applied and current names data are promulgated.

DNR advises that geographic name changes should be implemented through that board. DNR further advises that the board does not encourage changing existing names, except to make a name consistent with well-established local usage.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SJ 3 (Senator Gladden, *et al.*) - Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Archives, Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Geological Survey, Department of Legislative Services

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