

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2017 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader

House Bill 173

(Delegate Arentz, *et al.*)

Environment and Transportation

Finance

Baltimore Metropolitan Council - Queen Anne's County - Membership

This bill adds a member appointed by the Board of County Commissioners of Queen Anne's County to the Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC). The bill also expands geographic eligibility requirements for two existing council positions to allow otherwise eligible members of the General Assembly who represent a district in Queen Anne's County to be appointed to the council.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: BMC is largely funded for transportation planning purposes through the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB). BMC anticipates additional costs of approximately \$100,000 for transportation planning activities due to the bill. A portion of these costs is eligible for existing federal and State funding provided through the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT). MDOT advises that it has already reallocated the funds to include Queen Anne's County. Remaining costs are paid by Queen Anne's County through membership dues.

Local Effect: According to BMC, Queen Anne's County membership dues are expected to be approximately \$59,200 annually. Accounting for the bill's October 1, 2017 effective date, Queen Anne's County expenditures increase by \$44,400 in FY 2018 and \$59,200 annually thereafter. Local government expenditures for existing BMC members are not expected to be affected by the addition of Queen Anne's County to BMC. Actual expenditures by Queen Anne's County may vary from this estimate, as the county did not respond to repeated information requests from the Department of Legislative Services in time for this fiscal and policy note. Local government revenues are not affected.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background:

Baltimore Metropolitan Council

BMC is a regional council of governments. The “region” for BMC’s purposes means the area that includes all of Baltimore City and Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, and Howard counties. The purposes of BMC are to:

- serve as a forum for local officials and their representatives to identify and address problems in the region;
- provide a central source of information and coordination for fashioning responses to needs in the region;
- assist local jurisdictions in developing regional policies, prioritizing regional infrastructure needs, and developing regional strategies; and
- facilitate coordination and collaboration among local jurisdictions and organizations in the Baltimore region to foster economic growth and development in the region in areas that include transportation, housing, workforce development, and renewable energy projects and usage.

BMC is composed of nine members appointed by specified executive or legislative officials from the areas that they represent. Members represent Baltimore City; Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, and Howard counties; the House of Delegates; the Senate of Maryland; and the private sector. The two General Assembly members must represent a district within one of the above counties or Baltimore City.

BMC staff consists largely of planners who work on transportation, demographics, air and water quality, and procurement issues. BMC’s fiscal 2016 budget was approximately \$5.6 million, \$727,611 of which consisted of local government dues. BMC also hosts and staffs the BRTB, a federally required planning organization, discussed below.

Baltimore Regional Transportation Board

Federal regulations require that each urbanized area, as a condition to the receipt of federal capital or operating transportation assistance, have a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process carried out by a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in cooperation with the state that results in plans and programs consistent with the development of the urbanized area. BRTB is the federally recognized MPO for the Baltimore metropolitan region.

The mission of BRTB is to provide regional transportation planning and policymaking for the Baltimore metropolitan region. Specifically, BRTB provides overall program management of an annual work program – the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). UPWP is funded through an 80% planning grant provided by the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration and a 20% match provided by MDOT and the local governments of the Baltimore metropolitan planning area.

BRTB approved an amendment to its bylaws to include Queen Anne’s County as a nonvoting member in December 2015. Subsequently, BRTB is now a 12-member board representing the cities of Annapolis and Baltimore; Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, Howard, and Queen Anne’s counties; MDOT; the Maryland Department of the Environment; the Maryland Department of Planning; and the Maryland Transit Administration.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 212 (Senator Hershey) - Finance.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Transportation; Baltimore Metropolitan Council; Baltimore Region Transportation Board; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 30, 2017
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