

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2017 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 643
Ways and Means

(Delegate Metzgar, *et al.*)

Property Tax Credit - Elderly Individuals and Veterans - Eligibility

This bill alters one of the eligibility criteria for a local option property tax credit for elderly individuals by removing the requirement that the individual must have lived in the same dwelling for at least the preceding 40 years. In lieu of this existing requirement, the bill provides that the individual must have lived in the county for the preceding 40 years and the dwelling for which the tax credit is claimed must be located in that county.

The bill takes effect June 1, 2017, and applies to taxable years beginning after June 30, 2017.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: County and municipal property tax revenues may decrease beginning in FY 2018 to the extent that local jurisdictions grant the property tax credit and the changes to existing eligibility requirements result in additional individuals becoming eligible for the property tax credit. Depending on the jurisdiction, the revenue decrease may be significant. The amount of the revenue decrease depends on the number of eligible homeowners, the value of residential property tax assessments, and local property tax rates. Local expenditures are not affected.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Chapter 498 of 2016 authorized local governments to grant, by law, a property tax credit for a dwelling owned by (1) an individual who is at least 65 years old and has lived in the same dwelling for at least the preceding 40 years or (2) a retired

member of the U.S. Armed Forces who is at least 65 years old. The amount of the property tax credit may not exceed 20% of the county or municipal property tax imposed on the property and may be granted for up to five years.

Local governments may provide, by law, for (1) the maximum assessed value of a dwelling that is eligible for the tax credit; (2) additional eligibility criteria for the tax credit; (3) regulations and procedures for the application and uniform processing of requests for the tax credit; and (4) any other provision necessary to carry out the tax credit.

Similar Property Tax Credits for Elderly Individuals

Local governments are authorized to grant a property tax credit against the county or municipal property tax imposed on real property that is owned and used as the principal residence of an individual who is at least 65 years old and of limited income. Local governments are authorized to provide for the amount and duration of the tax credit, additional eligibility criteria for the tax credit, regulations and procedures for the application and uniform processing of requests for the tax credit, and any other provisions necessary.

Local Fiscal Effect: County and municipal property tax revenues may decrease beginning in fiscal 2018, to the extent that local jurisdictions grant the property tax credit, and the changes to existing eligibility requirements result in additional individuals becoming eligible for the property tax credit. Depending on the jurisdiction, the revenue decrease may be significant. The amount of the revenue decrease depends on the number of eligible homeowners, the value of residential property tax assessments, and local property tax rates. Local expenditures are not affected.

As a point of reference, **Exhibit 1** shows the average residential property tax assessments and property tax rates, by county, for fiscal 2017. Information on local property tax rates and property assessments for Maryland counties and Baltimore City can be found in Chapters 4 and 5 of the *Overview of Maryland Local Governments* report. A copy of the report can be found on the Department of Legislative Services website.

Exhibit 1
Residential Property Tax Assessments and Property Tax Rates
Fiscal 2017

| <u>County</u> | <u>Average Total Value</u> | <u>Average County Homestead Credit</u> | <u>Property Tax Rate FY 2017</u> |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| Allegany | \$94,878 | \$7,939 | \$0.9770 |
| Anne Arundel | 276,482 | 89,033 | 0.9150 |
| Baltimore City | 133,263 | 30,478 | 2.2480 |
| Baltimore | 226,681 | 16,799 | 1.1000 |
| Calvert | 263,809 | 25,493 | 0.9520 |
| Caroline | 178,051 | 14,332 | 0.9800 |
| Carroll | 302,051 | 8,684 | 1.0180 |
| Cecil | 292,387 | 8,832 | 0.9914 |
| Charles | 259,751 | 8,850 | 1.2050 |
| Dorchester | 194,673 | 25,337 | 0.9760 |
| Frederick | 293,806 | 9,441 | 1.0600 |
| Garrett | 120,058 | 16,688 | 0.9900 |
| Harford | 257,605 | 8,181 | 1.0420 |
| Howard | 379,774 | 19,679 | 1.1900 |
| Kent | 223,204 | 43,863 | 1.0220 |
| Montgomery | 328,888 | 15,822 | 1.0382 |
| Prince George's | 214,043 | 33,141 | 1.3740 |
| Queen Anne's | 337,525 | 21,516 | 0.8471 |
| St. Mary's | 262,461 | 31,496 | 0.8523 |
| Somerset | 104,915 | 15,019 | 1.0000 |
| Talbot | 250,991 | 154,296 | 0.5471 |
| Washington | 203,350 | 10,216 | 0.9480 |
| Wicomico | 160,278 | 7,555 | 0.9516 |
| Worcester | 216,166 | 24,620 | 0.8350 |

Source: State Department of Assessments and Taxation

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Association of Counties; Property Tax Assessment Appeals Board; State Department of Assessments and Taxation; Department of Legislative Services

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mm/hlb

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