

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2021 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 773
Rules

(Senator Simonaire)

Constitutional Amendment - General Assembly - Standing Committee
Appointments

This proposed constitutional amendment, if approved by the voters at the next general election, requires each chamber of the General Assembly to designate its highest elected member within each party to appoint their party's members to standing committees in a manner that reflects the diversity of each house.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The change is procedural in nature and does not affect government finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Article III, Section 19 of the Maryland Constitution requires each chamber of the General Assembly to appoint its own officers and determine the rules of its own proceedings. In accordance with House and Senate rules, members are appointed to standing committees by the Presiding Officers at the beginning of each session. A member generally may not be appointed to more than one standing committee, with the exception of the House Rules and Executive Nominations, Senate Rules, and Senate Executive Nominations committees.

Under Senate rules, the minority leader must, after consultation with the Senate President, recommend minority party members for appointment to each Senate standing committee. After due consideration of the minority leader's recommendations, the President must appoint members to each standing committee in a manner that reflects the diversity of the Senate, including but not limited to political party affiliation.

House rules specify that the minority representation on each House committee, except the House Rules Committee, must be computed by determining the ratio of minority members in the House to the total membership of the House, applying the same ratio to the total membership of the committee, and resolving any fraction to the nearest whole.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Board of Elections; Department of Legislative Services

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