

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2024 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

Senate Bill 777

(The President)(By Request - State Treasurer)

Budget and Taxation

Environment and Transportation

State Treasurer and Comptroller - Membership Responsibilities

This bill removes the State Treasurer from membership in (1) the Board of Trustees for the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF); (2) the Maryland Commission on Climate Change (MCCC); (3) the Board of Directors of the Maryland Environmental Service (MES); and (4) the Coast Smart Council in the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The bill adds the Comptroller, or the Comptroller's designee, to membership in MCCC and the Coast Smart Council in DNR. The bill reduces, from five to four, the number of members that constitute a quorum and the minimum number of votes necessary for any action taken by the Board of Directors of MES. The bill also makes corresponding changes related to the authority and duties associated with being a member of these boards, commissions, and/or councils. **The bill takes effect June 1, 2024.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill is not anticipated to materially affect State operations or finances; however, the State Treasurer's Office may experience administrative efficiencies to the extent the bill reduces the number of meetings the office is required to attend each year. The Comptroller's Office can handle the bill's requirements with existing budgeted resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background:

Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation

The General Assembly created MALPF to preserve productive agricultural land and woodland, limit the extent of urban development, and protect agricultural land and woodland as open space. The foundation, with the assistance and cooperation of landowners and local governments, purchases development rights easements as a means of protecting agricultural land and woodland production activities.

Maryland Commission on Climate Change

MCCC, originally created by executive order, was codified in statute pursuant to Chapter 429 of 2015 to advise the Governor and the General Assembly on ways to mitigate the causes of, prepare for, and adapt to the consequences of climate change. The commission is required to submit annual updates to the Governor and the General Assembly on the State's efforts to mitigate the causes of, prepare for, and adapt to the consequences of climate change, including any future plans and recommendations for legislation. The Maryland Department of the Environment and DNR jointly staff the commission.

Maryland Environmental Service

MES is an instrumentality of the State and a self-supporting, not-for-profit public corporation that serves State, local, and federal agencies and the private sector through designing, planning, financing, constructing, operating, and monitoring projects for water and wastewater treatment, solid waste management, composting, recycling, dredged material management, hazardous materials cleanup, stormwater services, and renewable energy. The service operates more than 200 water and wastewater treatment facilities as well as solid waste transfer stations, material recycling facilities, and various other facilities. MES operates on a fee-for-service basis under contract.

Coast Smart Council

In response to ongoing concern about the vulnerability of the State's infrastructure investments to sea level rise and coastal flooding, in December 2012, Governor Martin J. O'Malley issued the Climate Change and Coast Smart Construction executive order. Chapter 415 of 2014, generally codified the executive order and established a Coast Smart Council in DNR and required the council to develop specified

“Coast Smart” siting and design criteria to address sea level rise and coastal flood impacts on capital projects.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: HB 918 (The Speaker)(By Request - State Treasurer) - Environment and Transportation.

Information Source(s): Comptroller’s Office; Maryland Environmental Service; Maryland State Treasurer’s Office; Maryland Department of Agriculture; Maryland Department of the Environment; Department of Natural Resources; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 11, 2024
km/hlb Third Reader - March 18, 2024
Revised - Amendment(s) - March 18, 2024

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