

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2024 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader

Senate Bill 248 (Chair, Education, Energy, and the Environment
Committee)(By Request - Departmental - State Library)
Education, Energy, and the Environment Ways and Means

Libraries - Regional Resource Centers - Governing Board Membership

This departmental bill increases the maximum authorized number of public members (from one to two) on the governing board for each regional library resource center (*e.g.*, Eastern Shore, Southern Maryland, Western Maryland). **The bill takes effect July 1, 2024.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. Altering the appointment process of board members does not affect governmental finances.

Local Effect: None. Altering the appointment process of board members does not affect governmental finances.

Small Business Effect: The Maryland State Library Agency (MSLA) has determined that this bill has minimal or no impact on small business (attached). The Department of Legislative Services concurs with this assessment.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: Chapters 676 and 677 of 2023 altered the governance structure of the three public libraries designated as regional resource centers (*e.g.*, Eastern Shore, Southern Maryland, Western Maryland) by establishing a governing board for each regional resource center.

Specifically, for the Eastern Shore and Southern Maryland regional resource centers, the governing board consists of the following members: (1) a library trustee from each participating library system; and (2) up to one member of the public from each area served by the participating library systems.

The initial members of the governing board must be appointed by the Regional Advisory Council; thereafter, the governing board must appoint future board members.

For the Western Maryland regional resource center, the Board of Trustees of the Washington County Free Library serves as the governing board. In addition, the bylaws of the Washington County Free Library govern the composition, appointment, qualifications, terms, and structure of the governing board.

According to MSLA, increasing the maximum number of public members will improve the diversity of the regional resource center boards and allow for more equitable representation of various communities served by the centers. MSLA further notes that, currently, board membership consists overwhelmingly of retirees, with minimal representation of other demographic groups. Under the bill, MSLA states that regional resource centers will have greater flexibility in recruiting board members that are aligned with library and community initiatives.

Additional Information

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

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): St. Mary's County; Maryland State Library Agency; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 15, 2024
rh/clb Third Reader - February 2, 2024

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ANALYSIS OF ECONOMIC IMPACT ON SMALL BUSINESSES

TITLE OF BILL: Libraries - Regional Resource Centers - Governing Board Membership

BILL NUMBER: SB0248

PREPARED BY: Irene Padilla, State Librarian

PART A. ECONOMIC IMPACT RATING

This agency estimates that the proposed bill:

 X WILL HAVE MINIMAL OR NO ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND SMALL BUSINESSES

OR

 WILL HAVE A MEANINGFUL ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND SMALL BUSINESSES

PART B. ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS