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Senate Bill 109 – Maryland Public Ethics Law – School Boards – Compliance Certification

Testimony Before the Environment and Transportation Committee

The State Ethics Commission provides this informational written testimony to explain the impact of this proposed legislation on the agency. Senate Bill 109 will not have a fiscal impact on the State Ethics Commission. The proposed legislation would have a small operational impact that the agency can absorb with its current resources. The State Ethics Commission will be required to work with all local boards of education to notify them of the annual certification requirement, develop a certification form similar to other certification forms currently used by the Commission for other local government entities, and monitor certification compliance. Currently, counties and municipalities that are required to adopt local ethics laws certify to the State Ethics Commission annually that their respective local ethics laws include certain conflict of interest and financial disclosure requirements for local elected officials and candidates for local elected office established in Subtitle 8 of the Public Ethics Law. Bicounty commissions must also submit an annual compliance certification to the State Ethics Commission that its ethics regulations contain certain conflict of interest and financial disclosure requirements for employees and lobbying provisions similar to State lobbying provisions.

Local boards of education will be required to submit an annual certification form to the State Ethics Commission in compliance with the proposed legislation. Local boards of education may have to amend existing ethics policies to include this annual certification requirement.