

Department of Fiscal Services  
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE

Senate Bill 481 (Senator Ruben, et al.)  
Judicial Proceedings

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**Evidence - Voiceprints - Admissibility in Criminal Cases**

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This bill establishes the admissibility of “voiceprints” as evidence in a criminal proceeding to prove or disprove the identification of a person’s voice under specific circumstances. The bill also allows the court to grant a continuance to the proceedings if parties fail to provide specified information in a timely manner.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Potential indeterminate increase in general fund expenditures. Revenues would not be affected.

**Local Effect:** Potential indeterminate expenditure increase. Revenues would not be affected.

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**Fiscal Analysis**

**Background:** Currently, the Baltimore County Police Department is sponsoring a pilot program in the Detective Division using “voiceprint” equipment as an investigative tool. The program began in December 1995. The initial expenditure was \$7,325 for the equipment and \$975 per person for training on the equipment.

**State Expenditures:** General fund expenditures could increase if “voiceprint” equipment would have to be purchased by the Judiciary or the State Police. Expenditures could also increase if the State Police hire private companies to take a “voiceprint”.

**Local Expenditures:** Expenditures could increase if “voiceprint” equipment would have to be purchased by the local police departments. Alternatively, expenditures could increase if the State’s Attorneys hire private companies to take the “voiceprint”. Local jurisdictions

support the Office of the State's Attorney as well as the local police departments. Any effect on local expenditures cannot be reliably determined at this time.

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**Information Source(s):** Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts), Baltimore County Police Department, Department of Fiscal Services

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