

Department of Fiscal Services
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE
Revised

Senate Bill 742 (Senator Miller, et al.)

Finance

Referred to Commerce and Government Matters

Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge and Tunnel Compact

This amended bill repeals the requirement that federal funding provide the majority of the funds necessary to finance the activities of the Woodrow Wilson Bridge and Tunnel Authority. The bill provides instead that federal funds must be provided to fund 100% of specified costs. The bill defines the rights of the authority to issue bonds to finance the costs of the bridge and/or tunnel projects. The bill provides that toll revenues shall not exceed the amount required to meet debt service requirements of applicable trust indentures of the authority.

The bill requires the authority to develop a management plan that includes an organizational structure and a staffing plan including job descriptions and salary schedules. The bill also authorizes the authority to establish a police force or contract with an existing governmental entity for such services and to enter into contracts with existing governmental entities for design, engineering, financing, construction, or operating services.

The bill reduces the number of voting members of the authority's governing board from 13 to 9 by reducing the number of members appointed by the Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Governor of the State of Maryland by two each.

This bill may not take effect until a similar act is passed by the Commonwealth of Virginia and the District of Columbia.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Indeterminate impact on revenues and expenditures as discussed below.

Local Effect: None.

Fiscal Analysis

State Effect: This bill makes substantive changes to the Woodrow Wilson Bridge and Tunnel Compact. However, the Department of Fiscal Services has not been provided with information that would make it possible to evaluate the impact of this bill on revenues and expenditures of the authority. Further, the Department of Fiscal Services advises that special fund expenditures could increase to the extent the Maryland Department of Transportation provides services in support of the authority, an amount that cannot be reliably estimated at this time.

The federal government has committed to paying an amount equivalent to the estimated cost of building a six-lane drawbridge. In the event the authority elects to construct a larger bridge or tunnel, the difference between the federal contribution and actual costs would be financed by local governments, tolls, and any other sources available to the authority. Tolls will be set to only cover debt service and operating costs.

Information Source(s): Department of Transportation, Department of Fiscal Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 1, 1996
ncs Revised - Senate Third Reader - March 26, 1996

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