

Department of Fiscal Services
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE

Senate Bill 737 (Senator Colburn)
Rules

Forest Conservation - Declaration of Intent - Prohibition

This bill prohibits the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) or a local government from requiring a landowner to file a declaration of intent regarding a proposed activity that is exempt from the Forest Conservation Act. DNR or a local authority may not take enforcement action against any landowner who acts in violation of a declaration of intent filed before the effective date of the bill.

The bill is effective June 1, 1996.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill would not directly affect State finances.

Local Effect: Potential minimal effect on expenditures; revenues would not be affected.

Fiscal Analysis

Background: The Forest Conservation Act provides that before an application for sediment and erosion control or subdivision is approved, a forest conservation plan must be approved for the site. This plan identifies and protects any forests located in sensitive areas on the site, including stream buffers, steep slopes, and floodplains. The forest conservation plan also provides for forest retention on the site consistent with the established land use; or through payment made into a local fund for reforestation of sensitive areas.

Local Effect: Under this bill, administrative costs due to processing declarations of intent could decrease. However, local governments could adopt other means of verifying exempted activities which could increase administrative expenditures. Any impact on local expenditures resulting from these changes would be minimal.

Information Source(s): Department of Natural Resources, Prince George's County,
Department of Fiscal Services

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