

Department of Fiscal Services
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 539 (Allegany County Delegation)
Commerce and Government Matters

Allegany County - Fire Police

This bill adds Allegany County to the list of counties in which 12 members per fire company may be appointed as deputy sheriffs and in which additional authority is provided to fire police. Currently, fire company members may only exercise the powers of deputies at fires or on the way to and from fires. Under the bill, these powers are extended to parades, accidents, other emergencies, or other public functions conducted under the auspice of the volunteer fire company or the sheriff's department. The Sheriff may remove a member of a fire company appointed as a deputy sheriff at any time for just cause.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: Potential indeterminate increase in Allegany County expenditures. No effect on revenues.

Fiscal Analysis

Local Expenditures: Allegany County expenditures could increase by an indeterminate amount due to the additional liability for actions involving fire company members when serving as deputy sheriffs. The county would be liable for any claims or damages caused by tortious acts of these members. At this time, the number of claims or damages, the outcome of lawsuits, and the settlement amounts cannot be determined. Any liability, however, is limited under the Local Government Tort Claims Act to \$200,000 per an individual claim and \$500,000 per total claims that arise from the same occurrence for damages resulting from tortious acts or omissions.

Information Source(s): Allegany County, Office of the Attorney General, Department of Fiscal Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 14, 1996

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