

**Department of Fiscal Services**  
Maryland General Assembly

**FISCAL NOTE**

House Bill 656 (Charles County Delegation)  
Commerce and Government Matters

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**Charles County - County Commissioners - Authority to Construct, Extend, and Acquire Water or Sewer Systems or Stormwater Management Areas**

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This bill authorizes the Charles County Commissioners to acquire and improve a private sewer system or stormwater management area upon request. The county may also construct or extend an existing water or sewer system or stormwater area upon request. Before the county may undertake these actions, a petition must be filed by a majority of the property owners in the affected areas. In order to cover its costs, the county may levy an annual benefit assessment on the affected properties.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None.

**Local Effect:** Charles County revenues and expenditures could increase by an indeterminate amount as discussed below.

**Small Business Effect:** Potential meaningful effect on small businesses as discussed below.

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**Fiscal Analysis**

**Local Effect:** The bill authorizes Charles County to (1) acquire and improve private sewer systems or stormwater management areas; and (2) construct new or extend existing water or sewer systems or stormwater management areas. The county may levy an annual benefit assessment on the properties served by these systems to cover the costs of acquisition and improvements, and construction or extension. The number of projects to be undertaken by the county cannot be determined beforehand. However, it is assumed that any costs incurred by the county would be fully offset by the benefit assessments.

Charles County expenditures could also increase due to the additional number of public hearings. However, the increase would be minimal, and it could be absorbed within existing resources.

**Small Business Effect:** Under the bill, the Charles County Commissioners may acquire and improve private sewer and stormwater management areas upon request. According to Charles County, there are no private sewer systems or stormwater management areas operating in the county. To the extent that a small business constructs such facilities, they could be impacted if the county acquires it because the business would cease to exist. A small business could also benefit if the county improves the sewer system or stormwater management area. This option could allow for improvement that would not otherwise be possible for the business to make on its own.

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**Information Source(s):** Charles County, Department of Fiscal Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 18, 1997

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Analysis by: Thomas Himler

Reviewed by: John Rixey

Direct Inquiries to:

John Rixey, Coordinating Analyst

(410) 841-3710

(301) 858-3710