

Department of Fiscal Services  
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 1228 (Delegates Walkup and W. Baker)  
Environmental Matters

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**Redeposit of Spoil - Construction of an Artificial Island Prohibited**

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This bill prohibits the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) from approving the construction of an artificial island with a contained area in the Chesapeake Bay for the redeposit of spoil or disposal of sewage sludge or any other dredged material. MDE may approve the construction of a contained area for the redeposit of spoil on the Pooles Island site or another former or existing island in the Chesapeake Bay. Any such contained areas may not be used for the redeposit of spoil from Baltimore Harbor or the disposal of sewage sludge.

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the Department of Natural Resources must report to the General Assembly by December 31, 1997 on the feasibility of constructing a contained area for the redeposit of dredged material on Pooles Island. MDOT may not apply for a permit to construct a contained area for the redeposit of spoil for any area except Pooles Island until MDOT has issued the required report, or an additional report, that explains why an island other than Pooles Island would be a more appropriate site.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Potential indeterminate effect on State expenditures. Revenues would not be affected.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None. The bill would not directly impact small businesses.

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## Fiscal Analysis

**State Effect:** Under the bill, options for artificial island creation currently included in the Governor's Dredge Material Management Plan could not be undertaken. In addition, MDOT advises that there is federal opposition to the Pooles Island site due to its proximity to Aberdeen Proving Ground. There are other existing or former island sites being considered, such as Poplar Island; this option is more expensive than many others due to its location.

While sewage sludge is not included in materials planned to be disposed of on any artificial island, dredge material from Baltimore Harbor is included. Given the restrictions of the bill, MDOT might have to use potentially more costly dredge disposal sites more intensively than currently planned, utilize open-water placement, or scale back dredging plans. It is unclear what sites might be available to handle dredged material from the harbor.

**Small Business Effect:** In the event that dredging plans have to be scaled back, small businesses that rely on port traffic or that assist in dredging operations could potentially be affected. Conversely, if open-water placement were used, this could have an indeterminable negative impact on the seafood industry.

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**Information Source(s):** Maryland Department of Transportation, Maryland Department of the Environment, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Fiscal Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 24, 1997  
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