

**Department of Fiscal Services**  
Maryland General Assembly

**FISCAL NOTE**

Senate Bill 179 (Senator Ferguson)  
Economic and Environmental Affairs

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**General Assembly - Term Limits**

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This bill proposes a constitutional amendment which prohibits members of the General Assembly from serving more than three consecutive terms in one house beginning with the January 2003 term. An individual can be elected to a house in which three terms have been consecutively served if four years have passed since the expiration of the last term.

An individual who has served at least two consecutive terms in the Senate may not serve in the House of Delegates in the subsequent term of office, unless the individual is appointed to complete an unexpired term. Unless at least four full years have elapsed since the expiration of the individual's last full term in the Senate, the individual may not run for reelection in the House. An individual may not be a candidate for election to either house beginning in November 2002 if the individual has served six or more terms in the General Assembly.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Expenditures could decrease minimally as discussed below. Revenues are not affected.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None. This bill would not directly affect small businesses.

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**Fiscal Analysis**

**State Expenditures:** Membership in the legislative pension system is optional. Term limits may influence a legislator's decision to participate in the pension system. Additionally, maximum retirement benefits are obtained after 22.5 years of service. The structure of these term limits may make it more difficult to achieve 22.5 years of service. To the extent that

these effects are realized, State costs for the legislative pension system would be reduced. It is not possible to quantify the amount of the reduction, but it would probably not be substantial.

The Maryland Constitution requires bills that propose amendments to the Constitution be publicized in at least two newspapers in each county, if available, and in at least three newspapers in Baltimore City once a week for four weeks immediately preceding a general election. The costs associated with these requirements are borne by the State. It is anticipated that the budget of the State Board of Elections for fiscal 1999 will contain funding for publishing constitutional amendments for the 1998 general election.

**Local Expenditures:** If approved by the General Assembly, this constitutional amendment will be submitted to the voters at the 1998 general election. It should not require additional costs for the county election boards to administer the election.

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**Information Source(s):** Maryland State Retirement Agency, Department of Fiscal Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 6, 1997  
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