

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 973 (Delegate Vallario. *et al.*)

Judiciary

Criminal Procedure - Courts - Jurisdiction

This bill gives the circuit courts jurisdiction, in all criminal cases, over: (1) determination of eligibility for and conditions of pretrial release; (2) bail review; (3) acceptance of guilty pleas and imposition of sentences following acceptance of guilty pleas; and (4) acceptance of prayers for jury trials. Currently, the District Court generally handles items (1),(2), and (4) for all criminal cases and (3) for criminal cases that are heard in District Court.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Potential indeterminate net effect on general fund expenditures. No effect on revenues.

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

Small Business Effect: None.

Fiscal Analysis

State Expenditures: Apparently, the bill would give circuit courts the option of undertaking the enumerated functions. To the extent that the bill results in a shift in workload from District Court judges to circuit court judges (for example, if circuit court judges take on responsibility for initial appearance and/or bail review hearings), the State could experience lower operating costs for the District Court. However, the workload of the District Court and/or circuit court clerks' offices could increase due to increased administrative activities necessary for managing and keeping track of cases. The precise impact of the bill on State finances cannot be reliably estimated at this time.

Local Expenditures: To the extent that this bill results in a shift in workload from District Court judges to circuit court judges, local governments could experience increased operating

costs for the circuit courts. The precise impact of the bill on local government finances cannot be reliably estimated at this time.

Information Source(s): Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts), Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 3, 1998

tlw

Analysis by: Claire E. Rooney

Reviewed by: John Rixey

Direct Inquiries to:

John Rixey, Coordinating Analyst

(410) 841-3710

(301) 858-3710