

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE

Senate Bill 717 (Senator Ruben)

Economic and Environmental Affairs

Potomac River - Water Removal

This bill prohibits the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) from issuing a permit to construct, reconstruct, change, or make an addition to any device, structure, or apparatus that will facilitate the removal of water from off shore of the Potomac River.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The requirements of the bill do not materially alter MDE's operations or finances.

Local Effect: Potential meaningful impact on local government.

Small Business Effect: Indeterminate impact on small business.

Fiscal Analysis

Local Effect: Currently, several local governments, including Hagerstown, Frederick, and Rockville withdraw water from the Potomac River. If these governments need to make repairs or adjustments to any of the mechanisms that they use to withdraw water from the river, they will be unable to do so as MDE will be forced to deny the permit. This could force these governments to find alternative water sources which could be more costly than using the Potomac River.

Small Business Effect: There are currently 41 active water appropriation permits to use the Potomac River. Most of these permits are for large businesses, including PEPCO and Martin Marietta Corporation, local governments, and federal agencies. Only a small number (less than 10) of permits are for small businesses that withdraw water from the Potomac River. However, to the extent that small businesses, including those involved in agriculture, are

involved in removing water from the Potomac River, they will be unable to get a permit from MDE to construct, reconstruct, change or make an addition to devices that facilitate the removal of water from the Potomac River. This could result in these businesses being forced to find alternative water sources that are more costly than using the Potomac River.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of the Environment, Department of Legislative Services

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