

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE

Senate Bill 158 (Senator Frosh. *et al.*)

Economic and Environmental Affairs

General Assembly - Legislative Redistricting

This bill proposes a constitutional amendment which allows any member of the General Assembly to introduce a bill proposing legislative redistricting in the second year following each decennial census of the United States. The Governor may sign or veto a redistricting bill.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Potential general fund expenditure increase. Revenues would not be affected.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Fiscal Analysis

Background: Under current law, the Governor prepares a redistricting plan following each decennial census. This plan is introduced as a joint resolution in the General Assembly on the first day of the regular session in the second year following the census, if the Governor does not call an earlier special session to consider the plan. If no plan has been adopted by the General Assembly by the 45th day of session, the Governor's plan becomes law.

State Expenditures: The Department of Legislative Services (DLS) and Office of Planning are responsible for much of the staff work regarding redistricting. Assuming that the Office of Planning continues to perform census-related analysis, there would not be a direct fiscal impact on either agency. Should the Office of Planning not provide certain census data to the Department of Legislative Services, it is estimated that four positions would be required at average salaries of \$38,000 (\$195,000 including benefits). Travel and computer expenses

could increase by approximately \$15,000. The Office of Planning anticipates performing the required work and sharing the results with DLS.

Costs could also increase if a special session is necessary to pass a redistricting plan. Under current law, a redistricting plan will be in place by the 45th day of the session. This constitutional amendment does not require passage of a plan by any given day; it also allows the Governor to veto any redistricting legislation. Thus, the likelihood of a special session would increase. A one-day special session would cost about \$10,000 (primarily for legislators' *per diem* allowances). Subsequent days could cost about \$13,000 (including lodging expenses). Any increase in expenditures for DLS for contractual employees and overtime could be absorbed within existing budgeted resources.

The Maryland Constitution requires that proposed 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. The fiscal 1999 budget of the State Board of Elections contains 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.

Information Source(s): Office of Planning, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 17, 1998

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