

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 1259 (Delegate Grosfeld)
Judiciary

Protection of Marriages

This bill provides that a marriage between two consenting adults regardless of gender, is valid in the State. The bill also alters the definition of “foreign marriage” to mean a marriage ceremony that is performed outside the State between two consenting adults in which at least one of the parties were or are citizens of the State.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Potential minimal effect on State finances.

Local Effect: Potential minimal effect on local government finances.

Small Business Effect: Potential minimal.

Fiscal Analysis

State Effect: State finances could be affected to the extent that more people would be able to claim married status as a result of this bill. For example, the State as creditor could be negatively affected if a debtor was able to hold property as tenants by the entireties. In addition, the State as employer could face increased costs if it is required to subsidize the health insurance benefits of employees’ same sex spouses. (The State does not currently provide health insurance benefits to domestic partners.) The number of State employees whose health insurance coverage could be affected by this legislation is unknown, but is assumed to be minimal. In addition, research indicates that when health benefits are offered to domestic partners, few workers take advantage of the plans. Any effect that this bill would have on State finances is expected to be minimal.

Local Effect: A local government could be affected by this bill in a similar manner as the

State to the extent that any members of same sex marriages are debtors of or employed by the governmental unit. In addition, marriage license revenues could increase by a minimal amount due to the expanded definition of a valid marriage.

Small Business Effect: A small business could be affected by this bill in a similar manner as the State to the extent that any members of same sex marriages are debtors of or employed by the business.

Information Source(s): Department of Legislative Services

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