

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
1999 Session

FISCAL NOTE
Revised

House Bill 615 (Delegate Crvor. *et al.*)

Environmental Matters

Potomac River Protection Act

This bill requires the Secretary of the Environment to conduct a study of the nontidal portion of the Potomac River Basin to provide a comprehensive assessment of future water supplies and demands. The Secretary may coordinate the study with other federal and State units, including the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River. The report shall include a summary of ongoing water quality studies pertaining to the Potomac River Basin and their status.

This bill takes effect June 1, 1999.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditure increase of \$100,000 over the course of FY 2000 and FY 2001 for contractual services to conduct the study. No effect on revenues.

Local Effect: Minimal impact on local governments.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Fiscal Analysis

Bill Summary: The bill requires a draft of the study to be published on or before December 1, 2000 in the Maryland Register. The draft is subject to a 60-day comment period. A final version of the Potomac River study must be published and submitted to the General Assembly by June 1, 2001.

In addition, the bill prohibits the Secretary of the Environment, prior to six months after the

submission of the study to the General Assembly, from granting a waterway construction permit pending on or before April 15, 1999 to any person to construct a water intake pipe in the Potomac River, unless: (1) the pipe is a replacement pipe; (2) the pipe cannot be used concurrently with the pipe currently in use; (3) the pipe does not have the capacity to withdraw from the Potomac River an amount of water that exceeds the amount of water the person is authorized to withdraw under the water appropriation permit by more than 5 million gallons of water per day (mgd); and (4) the pipe is placed not less than 30 inches below the water surface at the river's historic low flow.

State Effect: The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) reports that it is currently developing a study, in conjunction with the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River, that would examine Potomac River water supply and demand issues.

In order to conduct the Potomac River assessment survey in the required time frame, MDE advises that general fund expenditures would increase by approximately \$100,000 over the two-year course of the study. This cost reflects the hiring of outside contractual resources to conduct the study under the supervision of the department. The contractual resources would conduct data collection and analysis as well as computer modeling and analysis in addition to any other tasks required to complete the study.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 4, 1999

Inc/jr

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