

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
1999 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 498 (Delegate Weir)

Commerce and Government Matters

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Legislative Districting - Districts and Subdistricts

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This bill proposes a constitutional amendment to require that, unless otherwise provided by law and to the extent practicable, each legislative district must be contained wholly within a county. If a legislative district is configured so that a majority of its population resides in one county and the remaining portion in another county, the legislative district must be subdivided into delegate districts so that the lesser population is contained within a single-member delegate district. A single-member delegate district may contain population from both counties.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** Minimal, as discussed below.

**Local Effect:** Minimal, as discussed below.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Fiscal Analysis

**Background:** Currently, there are 47 legislative districts in Maryland. Of these districts, 3 are subdivided into 3 single-member delegate districts and 10 are divided into 2-member and single-member delegate districts. The remaining 34 districts have 3-member districts.

**State Expenditures:** Any costs associated with developing a redistricting plan would be minimal, and could be absorbed within the existing resources of the State Administrative Board of Election Laws (SABEL).

The Maryland Constitution requires that proposed amendments to the constitution be publicized in at least 2 newspapers in each county, if available, and in at least 3 newspapers

in Baltimore City once a week for 4 weeks immediately preceding a general election. The costs associated with these requirements are borne by the State. It is anticipated that the fiscal 2001 budget of SABEL will contain sufficient funding for publishing constitutional amendments for the 2000 general election.

**Local Expenditures:** Local elections boards could experience an increase in costs due to the redistricting plan. The impact would depend upon the scope of the redistricting plan, and its impact on election precincts and ballot styles. Although the scope of such a plan cannot be determined beforehand, any expenditure increase would be minimal.

If approved by the General Assembly, this constitutional amendment will be submitted to the voters at the 2000 general election. It should not require additional costs for the county election boards to administer the election.

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**Information Source(s):** State Administrative Board of Election Laws, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 17, 1999

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