

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2000 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 641 (Chairman, Appropriations Committee)
(Maryland Judicial Conference)

Appropriations

Circuit Court Real Property Records Improvement Fund

This bill extends the termination date for the Circuit Court Real Property Records Improvement Fund from June 30, 2001 to June 30, 2006.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Special fund revenues and expenditures for the Circuit Court Real Property Records Improvement Fund would be maintained. The Governor's proposed fiscal 2001 budget assumes special fund revenues of \$5 million for the fund.

Local Effect: Efficiency savings for local land records offices.

Small Business Effect: Potential meaningful.

Analysis

Current Law: The Circuit Court Real Property Records Improvement Fund is a nonlapsing revolving fund managed and supervised by the State Court Administrator, with advice from a five-member oversight committee. The fund consists of surcharges assessed on instruments recorded in the land records and the financing statement records, and revenues from copies made on equipment bought through the fund. The fund must be used to repair, replace, improve, modernize, and update office equipment and equipment-related services in the land records office of the clerk of the circuit court for each county.

State Revenues: In fiscal 1999, the fund received \$5.7 million in special fund revenues.

State Expenditures: In fiscal 1999, the fund made \$6.3 million in special fund expenditures. The fiscal 2000 budget assumes \$4 million in special fund revenues for the fund and the proposed fiscal 2001 budget assumes \$5 million in special fund revenues for the fund.

Local Fiscal Effect: An extension of the fund would allow continued improvements to be made in the 24 land records offices -- specifically, the completion of two major automation initiatives (ELROI and PLATO) as well as the eventual provision of Internet access to land record information.

Small Business Effect: Improvements in land records offices benefit the title and real estate industries. Small businesses that provide goods and services in connection with expenditures of the fund would also benefit from an extension of the fund.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: This fund was created in 1991 (SB 716). The original termination date was extended to June 30, 2001 in 1995 (HB 773).

Cross File: SB 214 (Chairman, Judicial Proceedings Committee) - Judicial Proceedings.

Information Source(s): Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts), Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 15, 2000
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