

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2000 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 73 (Delegate Campbell)

Commerce and Government Matters

Law Enforcement Officers - Political Activity - Restrictions

This bill alters provisions under the Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights (LEOBR) relating to the right of law enforcement officers to engage in political activity. Specifically, this bill alters the prohibition against an officer engaging in political activity by applying the prohibition to when the officer is in uniform and eliminating reference to when the officer "is acting in his official capacity." The prohibition continues to apply while an officer is on duty.

In addition, the bill defines "political activity" to include: (1) making speeches at political events; (2) engaging in the distribution of campaign materials; and (3) video or audio tape endorsements. Violations are subject to investigation under provisions of the LEOBR.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Minimal. These changes under the LEOBR, and any accompanying investigations of violations, are expected to have no material effect on governmental operations or finances. Any increase in investigations by the Department of State Police could be accommodated with existing budgeted resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: The applicable current law language being deleted by this bill simply states that the “right to engage in political activity shall not apply to any law enforcement officer when he is on duty or when he is acting in his official capacity.”

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of State Police, Office of Administrative Hearings, Montgomery County Sheriff’s Department, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 27, 2000

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