

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2000 Session

**FISCAL NOTE**

House Bill 688 (Prince George's County Delegation and Montgomery County  
Delegation)

Commerce and Government Matters

---

**Washington Suburban Sanitary District - At Large Commissioners**  
**PG/MC 5-00**

---

This bill adds three commissioners, all appointed by the Governor, to the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC). The Governor will appoint one member from a list submitted by the Public Service Commission, one member from a list submitted by the People's Counsel, and one other at large member. The Governor may not appoint more than two members from either Montgomery or Prince George's County, and all appointees must reside in the sanitary district. The bill also provides that not more than four commissioners, instead of two, from Montgomery County may be of the same political party. Under current law, the commission is made up of six commissioners, three appointed by the Montgomery County Executive and three by the Prince George's County Executive.

The bill is effective July 1, 2000.

---

**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None. Appointments could be made with the executive department's existing resources.

**Local Effect:** WSSC expenditures would increase by approximately \$68,000 in FY 2001 to fund the salaries of three additional commissioners plus the additional support staff and supplies they would require. Costs associated with modifications to WSSC commissioner offices and the commissioner hearing room are unknown. Montgomery and Prince George's counties' finances would not be affected.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

---

## Analysis

**Current Law:** The WSSC is made up of six commissioners, three appointed by the Montgomery County Executive and three by the Prince George's County Executive. Not more than two commissioners from Montgomery County may be of the same political party.

**Background:** Due in part to perceptions that the current governance structure of the WSSC leads to political stalemates, Chapter 713 of 1998 established a task force to examine the operations of the WSSC and options for privatizing some or all of its functions. Although the task force acknowledged that privatization would eliminate some of the current governance issues, it also recognized that privatization was not the only option for improving the structure. The task force declined to make specific recommendations about the governance structure, but it did recommend that Montgomery and Prince George's counties continue to evaluate the matter.

**Local Expenditures:** Each of the WSSC commissioners receives annual compensation of \$13,000 plus fringe benefits estimated at \$3,000 per year. By adding three new commissioners, WSSC expenditures would increase by \$48,000 annually. In addition, it is assumed that commissioner support costs (secretarial, supplies, and travel) would increase by 50% or \$20,000 per year. In total, annual WSSC costs would increase by \$68,000. Due to the July 1, 2000, start date, the WSSC would incur the full cost of the new commissioners in fiscal 2001.

To accommodate three new commissioners, WSSC would need to modify its office space and the hearing room fitted for six commissioners. The one-time cost for these alterations is unknown. The WSSC estimates costs not to exceed \$500,000, but depending on the extent of the modifications, the actual cost could be significantly lower.

---

### Additional Information

**Prior Introductions:** HB 870 was introduced in the 1998 session and would have added four new members to the WSSC, two from each of the counties. The bill was withdrawn.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Montgomery County, Prince George's County, Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 13, 2000

cncsr

---

Analysis by: Mark Collins

Direct Inquiries to:

John Rixey, Coordinating Analyst  
(410) 946-5510  
(301) 970-5510