

**Department of Legislative Services**

Maryland General Assembly

2001 Session

**FISCAL NOTE**

Senate Joint Resolution 7 (Senators Dyson and Frosh)

Economic and Environmental Affairs

Environmental Matters

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**Patuxent River Watershed - Amendment of Policy Plan**

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This joint resolution provides for the approval of the Patuxent River Commission's "1997 Addendum" as an amendment to the Patuxent River Policy Plan.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Compliance with this joint resolution would not directly affect State operations or finances.

**Local Effect:** Because all affected local governments have adopted the addendum by resolution, compliance with this joint resolution would not directly affect local operations or finances.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** Chapter 746 of 1980 established the Patuxent River Commission. The Patuxent River Policy Plan must be used as a policy guide by local jurisdictions and units of State government in carrying out their actions and regulatory programs in the Patuxent River watershed. The commission and the Department of Planning must periodically review and evaluate pertinent information, trends, and issues regarding the Patuxent River watershed in light of the plan and the commission's activities. Current law provides procedures for updating the plan through an amendment process. Upon approval by resolution of an amendment by at least six of the eight local jurisdictions

represented on the commission, an amendment to the plan must be presented to the General Assembly for approval.

**Background:** The commission, local governments, and the General Assembly adopted the original Patuxent River Policy Plan in 1984. The commission contends that a significant increase in development within the watershed has resulted in the loss of forest cover, agricultural land, open space, and wildlife habitat as well as an increase in impervious surface area, which has contributed to increased levels of nutrient and sediment pollution in the Patuxent River. In November 1997 the commission adopted an addendum, known as the 1997 Addendum, as an amendment to the plan in order to address these issues and the future management of the watershed. Effective October 24, 2000, all local governments represented on the commission adopted the addendum by resolution.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland Department of Environment, Prince George's County, Department of Legislative Services

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