

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2002 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 270 (Delegate Wood)

Commerce and Government Matters

Education, Health, and Environmental
Affairs

State Open Meetings Law Compliance Board - Duties

This bill requires the State Open Meetings Law Compliance Board to develop and conduct educational programs for the staffs and attorneys of public bodies, the Maryland Municipal League, and the Maryland Association of Counties. The bill changes the date, from July 1 to October 1, by which the board must submit an annual report to the Governor and the General Assembly. The bill also repeals the requirement that the report include a description of the impact on State and local governments of the inclusion within the meaning of a “public body” subject to the State’s open meetings laws: (1) a multimember board commission, or committee appointed by the Governor or the chief executive authority of a political subdivision of the State if the entity includes at least two individuals not employed by the State or one of its political subdivisions; and (2) the Maryland School for the Blind.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill’s changes could be handled with the existing budgeted resources of the Office of the Attorney General.

Local Effect: The bill would not substantively change local government activities or operations.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: On or before January 1, 1992, the State Open Meetings Law Compliance Board must develop and conduct educational programs for the staffs and attorneys of public bodies, the Maryland Municipal League, and the Maryland Association of Counties. The board must submit an annual report to the Governor and the General Assembly on or before July 1 of each year. The report must include a description of: (1) the board's activities; (2) the board's opinions in any cases brought before it; (3) the number and nature of complaints filed with the board, including a discussion of complaints concerning the reasonableness of the notice provided for meetings; (4) the impact on State and local governments of the inclusion within the meaning of a "public body" subject to the State's Open Meetings Act: (a) a multimember board commission, or committee appointed by the Governor or the chief executive authority of a political subdivision of the State if the entity includes at least two individuals not employed by the State or one of its political subdivisions; and (b) the Maryland School for the Blind; and (5) any recommendations for improvements to the provisions of the State's Open Meetings Act. The Office of the Attorney General is required to provide staff for the board.

Under Maryland's Open Meetings Act, with limited exceptions, a "public body" must meet in open session. A public body is any entity that: (1) consists of at least two individuals; and (2) is created by the Maryland Constitution; a State statute; a county charter; an ordinance, a rule, resolution, or bylaw; or an executive order of the Governor or of the chief executive authority of a political subdivision. Exclusions from the definition of "public body" include juries, the Governor's cabinet and Executive Council, and single member entities.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Office of the Attorney General, Department of Legislative Services

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