

Department of Legislative Services

Maryland General Assembly

2002 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 1301

(Delegate Rudolph, *et al.*)

Environmental Matters

**Environment - Maryland Public Water and Wastewater Construction -
Interagency Committee**

This bill establishes a three-member Interagency Committee on Public Water and Wastewater Treatment as a unit in the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). The committee must approve public water and wastewater construction projects and make recommendations to the Board of Public Works (BPW). The projects must be prepared in accordance with rules, regulations, and procedures adopted by MDE under the bill. The bill requires MDE to adopt regulations in consultation with BPW. The committee must report by January 1 of each year to the Governor and the General Assembly. The Secretary of the Environment must appoint a director of the committee, who shall be an employee of MDE, and MDE must provide employees to serve as the staff for the committee.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill would not materially affect State operations or finances.

Local Effect: None, assuming that the additional layer of review does not significantly delay the award of funds to local jurisdictions for such projects.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: MDE is authorized to award grants or loans to any State or local governmental entity responsible by law for the provision of water supply systems or

sewerage systems to finance specified costs. Capital projects are already subject to review and approval by several State entities, including the Department of Budget and Management, the Maryland General Assembly, and BPW. Specified loan projects are also subject to review by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

State Fiscal Effect: MDE advises that costs would increase by \$67,400 in fiscal 2003 to hire one water resource engineer to serve as the director, 1/3 program manager to provide technical staff support to the committee, and 1/3 office secretary to provide administrative support to the committee. Legislative Services advises, however, that because MDE already reviews public water and wastewater projects applying for specified State funding, MDE should be able to provide the required staff support to the committee with existing budgeted resources. The bill is unclear as to whether the committee would be responsible for reviewing public water and wastewater projects not already reviewed by MDE in some capacity. For purposes of this estimate, however, it is assumed that the bill simply adds another layer of review to the existing process already established within the agency.

Because BPW already reviews most public water and wastewater construction projects, BPW could handle the bill's requirements with existing budgeted resources. It is assumed that this bill will not result in additional capital spending by the State on public water and wastewater projects.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of the Environment, Board of Public Works, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 18, 2002
lsc/jr

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