

Department of Legislative Services

Maryland General Assembly

2002 Session

FISCAL NOTE

Revised

Senate Bill 666

(Senator Munson)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Commerce and Government Matters

Maryland Veterans Commission - Membership

This bill increases the membership of the Maryland Veterans Commission by including representatives from the Persian Gulf War and the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge. The bill also repeals the requirement that a member be appointed from the Veterans of World War I.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Any increase in expense reimbursements from adding one member would be minimal and absorbable within existing resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: The Maryland Veterans Commission is comprised of 29 members. The Chairman of the Maryland Veterans' Home Commission serves as an ex officio member. Of the 28 members appointed by the Governor, 1 must be appointed from each of the 8 congressional districts in Maryland, 1 must be a veteran of World War II appointed from the State-at-large, 1 must be a representative of a women veterans organization in Maryland, and 1 member must be appointed from each of the 18 organizations: the American Ex-Prisoners of War, Inc.; the American Legion; the Amvets; the Catholic War Veterans; the Disabled American Veterans; the Fleet Reserve Association; the Jewish War Veterans; the Marine Corps League; the Maryland Retired Officers Association; the

Military Order of the Purple Heart; the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association; the Polish Legion of American Veterans; the Veterans of Foreign Wars; the Veterans of World War I; the Vietnam Veterans of America; the Korean War Veterans Association, Inc.; the Black Veterans of All Wars, Inc.; and the Maryland Coalition of the Retired Enlisted Association.

The qualifications for all of the appointed members of the Maryland Veterans Commission specify that the individual must be a resident of the State, and a veteran whose separation from the service was under honorable conditions.

Background: The Maryland Veterans Commission serves Maryland veterans and their dependents through the Veterans Service Program, which is conducted through veterans service centers across the State. The Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs advises that no living member of the Veterans of World War I organization currently resides in Maryland. According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, there are 42,500 veterans of the Persian Gulf War living in Maryland. Persian Gulf War veterans are not currently represented on the Maryland Veterans Commission. The Battle of the Bulge was the largest land battle fought during World War II from December 16, 1944 to January 28, 1945. Over 1.1 million Allied and Axis soldiers fought in the battle including one-half million United States troops. More than 19,000 U.S. soldiers were killed in the Battle of the Bulge. According to 1998 Census statistics, there are more than 113,000 veterans of World War II living in Maryland. The Maryland Veterans Commission advises that veterans of the Battle of the Bulge are currently represented by the State's at-large member who must be a veteran of World War II.

State Fiscal Effect: The Maryland Veterans Commission advises that it meets four times annually in different locations throughout Maryland and that the commission reimburses its members for travel expenses and meals according to the standard State travel regulations. Adding an additional member to the Maryland Veterans Commission would increase expenditures by \$300 in fiscal 2003 which accounts for a nine-month period (October 1 – June 30). State expenditures would increase by \$400 each year thereafter, reflecting annualization.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Legislative Services

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