

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2002 Session

FISCAL NOTE

Senate Bill 478 (Senator Van Hollen, *et al.*)  
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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Joint Committee on Housing Policy

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This bill creates a 14-member Joint Committee on Housing Policy. The bill takes effect June 1, 2002.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** Any expense reimbursements for the committee members and staffing costs for the Department of Legislative Services could be handled with existing budgeted resources.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Analysis

**Bill Summary:** The bill creates a Joint Committee on Housing Policy to recommend changes in law and budgeting that can improve the condition and availability of housing for limited income residents of the State. The committee consists of the majority and minority leaders from both the House and the Senate, and five other senators and delegates appointed from among the members of the committees that deal with issues affecting housing policy. The committee must investigate the problems relating to housing policy in the State, particularly the difficulty of developing and promoting public policies affecting affordable housing and community development.

The bill also requires the Secretary of Housing and Community Development to cooperate with the committee and submit an annual report to the committee by October 1 regarding relevant housing issues. The committee must submit a report each year to the General Assembly by December 31 that describes the committee's progress and any

recommendations. The Department of Legislative Services must provide staffing for the committee.

**Current Law:** Two standing committees -- the House Economic Matters Committee and Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee -- have jurisdiction over most legislative housing issues and the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee addresses landlord-tenant issues. There is no committee dedicated solely to housing.

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) must submit reports to the Joint Chairmen of the House Appropriations Committee and the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee on specific housing issues at the chairmen's request. Beginning December 1, 2001, DHCD is also required to submit a quarterly report on delinquency loan rates and funding requests received for its rental housing, homeownership, special loan, and neighborhood development programs to the Joint Chairmen.

**Background:** DHCD prepares a Consolidated Plan, as required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), to guide the use of federal and State housing and community development funds. As part of this plan, DHCD conducts a housing needs assessment for low- to moderate-income households and for special needs households. The plan also includes a comprehensive housing market analysis that provides an inventory of housing across the State and discusses how to remove barriers to affordable homeownership. Further, the plan analyzes how existing programs meet the goals established by HUD, which are: (1) to provide decent housing; (2) to provide a suitable living environment; and (3) to expand economic opportunities.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** An identical bill was introduced as HB 638 in the 2001 session and was given an unfavorable report by the Economic Matters Committee.

**Cross File:** HB 192 (Delegate Grosfeld, *et al.*) – Economic Matters.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 22, 2002  
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