

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2004 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 740
Judicial Proceedings

(Senator Hughes)

Jury Duty - Exemption - Religious Beliefs

This bill exempts from jury duty a person whose religious beliefs prohibit the person from serving on a jury.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Minimal. Any expense incurred in printing revised juror qualification forms could be handled with existing resources.

Local Effect: Minimal. Any expense incurred in printing revised juror qualification forms in those counties that print their own forms could be handled with existing resources.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Any person summoned for jury service may be excused by the jury judge if the person shows that undue hardship, extreme inconvenience, or public necessity require the excuse, but only for the period of time the jury judge deems necessary. At the conclusion of this period, the person is once again eligible to be summoned for jury service.

The only persons who are exempt from jury service are:

- a member of the organized militia who is certified by the Military Department as a member; and

- a person who is 70 years old or older who has made a written request for an exemption.

Background: According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, no state currently exempts a person from jury duty based on religious beliefs.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: SB 575 of 2003 received an unfavorable report from the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee. HB 1018 of 2003 received an unfavorable report from the House Judiciary Committee.

Cross File: HB 911 (Delegate Marriott, *et al.*) – Judiciary.

Information Source(s): Baltimore County, Anne Arundel County, Garrett County, Montgomery County, Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts), Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 19, 2004
mll/jr

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