

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2004 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 406 (Allegany County Delegation)
Economic Matters

Western Maryland Code Counties - Licensed Professional Engineers

This bill allows Western Maryland code counties (*i.e.*, Allegany County) to authorize a licensed professional engineer to prepare, sign, seal, and date construction drawings for public structures in the county classified as storage or utility of less than 12,000 square feet in accordance with the Maryland building performance standards.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: This bill would not materially impact local government operations.

Small Business Effect: Potential meaningful effect on Allegany County architects to the extent they would no longer be retained to redraft, sign, seal, and date construction drawings for public structures in Allegany County that have been signed, sealed, and dated by a licensed professional engineer approved by the county. Small businesses in Allegany County wishing to expand their operations would incur fewer expenditures in capital improvement projects.

Analysis

Current Law: With specified exceptions, construction drawings must be signed, sealed, and dated by a licensed architect to be valid for use in all Maryland jurisdictions.

Background: Allegany County indicates that this bill will allow the county to increase development by reducing costs to builders and contractors. Builders and contractors

purchase prefabricated public structures from out-of-state firms that use computer programs to design public structures to meet Maryland's building codes. An engineer from out-of-state signs, seals, and dates the drawings associated with these prefabricated public structures. Currently, builders and contractors are required to have a licensed architect in Maryland redraft, sign, seal, and date those drawings; architects typically charge fees for this service.

Additional Comments: The bill does not specify if the professional engineer must be licensed in Maryland by reference to Title 14 of the Business Occupations and Professions Article; accordingly, Legislative Services assumes the bill intends to authorize Allegany County to authorize any licensed professional engineer to prepare, sign, seal, and date construction drawings for public structures in the county classified as storage or utility of less than 12,000 square feet.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: A similar bill was introduced at the 2003 session as HB 271. The bill received an unfavorable report by the House Economic Matters Committee.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Allegany County, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 4, 2004
ncs/ljm

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