

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2005 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 825
Appropriations

(Frederick County Delegation)

Finance

Frederick County - Fire and Rescue Services - Collective Bargaining

This bill amends the local laws of Frederick County to authorize the county commissioners to enact an ordinance allowing voluntary collective bargaining over wages and benefits between the board of county commissioners and the employee organization recognized by the board to be the exclusive representative of its regular, nonexempt, uniformed fire and rescue services employees.

Once authorized by a local ordinance, collective bargaining may include a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the board and the exclusive representative regarding wages and benefits, which binds the board for the period of time stated in the MOU. This bill does not permit an employee to engage in a strike, require collective bargaining in any form, or require a specific method or means of collective bargaining; nor does the bill authorize binding interest arbitration.

The bill is effective July 1, 2005.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: None. Merely authorizing the Frederick County Board of County Commissioners to enact an ordinance that would allow the county to engage in collective bargaining with an employee organization representing its fire and rescue employees would not directly affect county expenditures.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: The Frederick County Board of County Commissioners does not currently have the authority to pass an ordinance allowing the county to collectively bargain with fire and rescue services employees.

Local Fiscal Effect: Frederick County advises that the county does not currently engage in collective bargaining with any of its employee groups. If the county were to engage in collective bargaining with the fire and rescue services employees, it would need to hire a labor relations specialist at an annual cost of \$73,399 for salary (\$55,127), benefits (\$10,830), and retirement (\$7,442). Additionally, the county advises that legal counsel would be needed to represent the county in the collective bargaining process with the fire and rescue services employees, at a cost of \$50,000 annually.

Costs associated with the collective bargaining agreement produced by the parties would depend on the wages and benefits associated with the final agreement, which cannot be reliably quantified at this time; since the scope, means, and breadth of the collective bargaining process would be determined by the county, as this is not specified by the bill.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 789 (Senator Brinkley) – Finance.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 18, 2005
n/hlb

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