

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2005 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1186 (Washington County Delegation)
Ways and Means

Washington County Property Tax Commission

This bill establishes a Washington County Property Tax Commission to study property tax issues and the impact that property taxes has on county residents. The State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT) must provide staff support for the commission. The commission must submit a final report of its findings and recommendations to the Washington County Delegation and the Washington County Board of County Commissioners by November 30, 2005.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2005 and terminates December 31, 2005.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Any expense reimbursements for commission members and staffing costs for SDAT are assumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing budgeted resources.

Local Effect: The bill would not affect Washington County finances.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: Specifically, the bill requires the commission to: (1) analyze the impact of property tax assessments on Washington County's population, including the impact on work-force housing, senior citizens, and urban revitalization; (2) study the financial effects on the Washington County budget, with regards to the impact of a property tax assessment cap, a tax credit for senior citizens, or a property tax rate reduction; (3) suggest to the Washington County Board of County Commissioners and the Washington

County Delegation legislative or policy changes that the commission believes is necessary to implement its findings; and (4) examine any other pertinent property tax issue that the commission believes it should analyze.

The commission consists of seven voting members and two nonvoting members. The voting members include four members of the public appointed by the Washington County Delegation and three members of the public appointed by the Washington County Board of County Commissioners. The two nonvoting members include the President of the Washington County Board of County Commissioners, or the President's designee, and a representative of the Washington County Chapter of the Maryland Municipal League. Members are not entitled to compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the standard State travel regulations.

State Fiscal Effect: SDAT indicates the costs related to staffing the commission could total approximately \$919 in overtime for two employees. The Department of Legislative Services advises that these expenditures could be absorbed within existing agency budgeted resources.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Washington County, State Department of Assessments and Taxation, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 24, 2005
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