

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2008 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

House Bill 1083

(Washington County Delegation)

Environmental Matters

Education, Health, and Environmental  
Affairs

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**Washington County - Maintenance of Sidewalks**

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This bill specifies that the Washington County Commissioners may require the maintenance of sidewalks, footways, curbs, and gutters by an abutting property owner. The bill also authorizes the county commissioners to adopt regulations governing snow or ice removal or other obstructions or hazards by an abutting property owner.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None.

**Local Effect:** Potential significant reduction in Washington County expenditures for sidewalk maintenance. Revenues would not be affected.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** The Washington County Commissioners may require the installation of sidewalks along the public streets and highways of the county, except in incorporated municipalities. The commissioners may require that they be graded, paved, repaired, or improved, with curbs to be set and gutters laid, at the cost and expense of the abutting property owner; or compel by fine the owner or proprietor of any lot of parcel of land to pave or repair sidewalks or footways and to set curbs and lay gutters in front of the sidewalks.

With the concurrence of the local government, the State Highway Administration may require any developer of an industrial, commercial, or apartment area along a highway maintained by SHA to construct sidewalks parallel to the highway. After sidewalks are constructed under this section, they have to be maintained and repaired by the political subdivision in which they are located.

**Background:** Many municipalities in Washington County, including Hagerstown, require sidewalks to be maintained and repaired by an abutting property owner.

**Local Fiscal Effect:** Washington County advises that development in the county has increased the number of sidewalks considerably, and that requiring abutting property owners to maintain sidewalks could reduce Washington County expenditures for sidewalk maintenance by a significant amount. Authorizing the Washington County Commissioners to develop regulations on sidewalk snow removal would provide additional savings to the county.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

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

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 10, 2008  
mll/hlb

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