

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2009 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

Senate Bill 60

(Chair, Finance Committee)(By Request - Departmental -
Public Service Commission)

Finance

Economic Matters and Environmental Matters

**Maryland Transit Administration - Mass Transit Service Alterations - Public
Service Commission and People's Counsel Reporting and Representation
Requirements**

This departmental bill repeals a requirement that the Public Service Commission (PSC) and Office of the People's Council (OPC) submit reports on specified mass transit proposals to the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA), and a requirement that OPC attend and represent the public at related MTA hearings.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Although the bill may result in a marginal decrease in OPC and PSC's workload, it is not anticipated to have a significant impact on State operations or finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: PSC has determined that this bill has minimal or no impact on small business (attached). Legislative Services concurs with this assessment. (The attached assessment does not reflect amendments to the bill.)

Analysis

Current Law: PSC and OPC are required to submit reports that make recommendations on specified MTA proposals that may affect the operation of transit facilities as a coordinated regional transit system. Furthermore, PSC is required to prioritize

development of these reports above any other matters and submit the reports prior to a public hearing on a proposal.

Prior to making changes in service, in most instances, MTA must conduct thorough and detailed studies and hold public hearings. OPC is required to attend and represent the public interest at all of these MTA hearings.

Background: MTA seeks feedback from a number of advisory committees when considering transit service change proposals, including the MTA Citizens Advisory Committee, the Maryland Rail Commuters Advisory Council, citizen advisory committees for the proposed Red Line and Purple Line, and an advisory committee for bicyclists.

PSC is responsible for regulating public utilities (such as gas, electric, telephone, water, and sewage disposal companies) and certain passenger transportation companies doing business in Maryland. PSC is empowered to hear and decide matters relating to 1) rate adjustments; 2) applications to exercise or abandon franchises; 3) applications to modify the type or scope of service; 4) approval of issuance of securities; 5) promulgation of new rules and regulations; and 6) quality of utility and common carrier service.

While PSC has authority over common carriers' rates, terms, and service, it does not have this type of authority for MTA services. Furthermore, PSC advises that it does not have expertise in matters relating to mass transit. Nevertheless, PSC develops reports that respond to approximately two MTA service proposals annually. One PSC staff person dedicates approximately one day per year to meeting this requirement. OPC advises that it does not assist PSC with the development of these reports.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Office of People's Counsel, Public Service Commission, Maryland Department of Transportation, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 19, 2009
ncs/ljm Revised - Senate Third Reader - February 20, 2009

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ANALYSIS OF ECONOMIC IMPACT ON SMALL BUSINESSES

TITLE OF BILL: Maryland Transit Administration – Mass Transit Service Alterations –
Public Service Commission and People’s Counsel Reporting
Requirements

BILL NUMBER: SB 60

PREPARED BY: Public Service Commission

PART A. ECONOMIC IMPACT RATING

This agency estimates that the proposed bill:

 X WILL HAVE MINIMAL OR NO ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND
SMALL BUSINESS

OR

 WILL HAVE MEANINGFUL ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND
SMALL BUSINESSES

PART B. ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

The proposed legislation will have no impact on small business in Maryland.