

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2009 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 345 (Senator Exum)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Prince George's County - Board of License Commissioners - Petition Requirement

This bill allows the Board of License Commissioners in Prince George's County to consider a petition presented to them as a factor in determining whether to take the action sought by the petition only if each of the petition's signatures has been verified by the County Board of Elections to be that of a registered county voter.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2009.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: Potential significant impact on Prince George's County, depending on the petitions received by the board of license commissioners.

Small Business Effect: Potential minimal impact on businesses that have to wait for decisions by the Board of License Commissioners in Prince George's County because of the signature verification process.

Analysis

Current Law: There is no law in Prince George's County that governs how the board of license commissioners is to consider a petition that has been presented to them.

Local Fiscal Effect: The bill may have a potentially significant fiscal and operational impact on both the Board of License Commissioners and the County Board of Elections

in Prince George's County. The actual impact would depend on the number of petitions received, the number of signatures on each petition that would require verification, and the stage in the election calendar in which the petition is submitted. The board of license commissioners advises it is generally presented with at least 15 to 20 petitions per year, and it is not unusual for each petition to have between 50 and 500 signatures that would need to be verified. Requiring the county board of elections to verify signatures may extend the time it takes for the board of license commissioners to make decisions regarding matters for which the board has been presented with a petition, since the board would have to wait for verification before using the petition as a determining factor in its decision. The inability of the board of license commissioners to make instantaneous decisions in such matters may result in operational difficulties.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: SB 129 of 2008 received a hearing in the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, but no further action was taken. HB 1026, the cross filed bill, received a hearing in the House Economic Matters Committee, but was later withdrawn.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Prince George's County, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 4, 2009
mlm/mwc

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