

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2009 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

House Bill 1369

(Howard County Delegation)

Environmental Matters

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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**Howard County Ethics Law - Application for Zoning Regulation Amendment  
Ho. Co. 12-09**

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This bill requires an applicant for a zoning regulation amendment in Howard County to disclose, under oath, (1) any political contributions of at least \$500 over the preceding 48 months to a candidate for Howard County Executive or the County Council, and (2) any business relationships with either the county executive or member of the county council.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2009.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None.

**Local Effect:** None. The bill does not materially affect Howard County finances.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** In Howard County, an applicant for a zoning map amendment or an individual who participates in the adoption and approval of a comprehensive zoning plan must file an affidavit with the Howard County Ethics Commission disclosing, under oath, (1) any political contributions of at least \$500 over the preceding 48 months to a candidate for Howard County Executive or the County Council, and (2) any business relationships with either the county executive or county council members. The affidavit must be filed at least 30 days prior to any consideration of the application and must include the name of the candidate and the amount and date of the contribution.

Political contributions made between the filing of the application and the disposition of the application must be disclosed within five business days of the contribution. Any business relationship that begins during the same intervening period must be disclosed at its inception. The disclosure requirement does not apply to a transfer by a political action committee to a candidate or the candidate's committee. Candidate is defined as an individual who becomes an elected official.

An individual who knowingly and willfully violates the disclosure rules is subject to a fine of not more than \$5,000.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland Department of Planning, State Ethics Commission, Howard County, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 13, 2009  
ncs/mcr

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