

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2010 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 33 (Senator Haines)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Natural Resources - Right to Hunt, Fish, and Harvest Wild Game

This proposed constitutional amendment requires that every person have a right to hunt, fish, or harvest wild game, subject to regulatory and statutory restrictions.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill does not directly affect governmental operations or finances.

Local Effect: If approved by the General Assembly, this constitutional amendment will be submitted to the voters at the 2010 general election. It should not result in additional costs for the local boards of elections.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: The Maryland Constitution does not directly address the right to hunt, fish, and harvest wild game.

Background: There is some concern that support for hunting, fishing, and harvesting of wild game will decline as Maryland's population continues to shift toward more urban locations.

Ten states – Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Vermont, Virginia, and Wisconsin – have right-to-hunt amendments in their state constitutions. In addition, right-to-hunt amendments are on upcoming general election ballots in Arkansas and South Carolina.

Local Fiscal Effect: The Maryland Constitution requires that proposed amendments to the constitution be publicized either: (1) in at least two newspapers in each county, if available, and in at least three newspapers in Baltimore City once a week for four weeks immediately preceding the general election; or (2) by order of the Governor in a manner provided by law. State law requires local boards of elections to publicize proposed amendments to the constitution either in newspapers or on specimen ballots; local boards of elections are responsible for the costs associated with these requirements. It is anticipated that the budgets of local election boards will contain funding for notifying qualified voters about proposed constitutional amendments for the 2010 general election in newspapers or on specimen ballots.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Natural Resources, Maryland State Board of Elections, Office of the Attorney General, National Conference of State Legislatures, Department of Legislative Services

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mlm/lgc

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