

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2010 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

House Bill 547

(Wicomico County Delegation, *et al.*)

Ways and Means

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

**Wicomico County, Worcester County, and Somerset County - Boards of Elections
- Membership**

This bill alters the membership of the Somerset County, Wicomico County, and Worcester County boards of elections to each consist of five regular members instead of three regular members and two substitute members. Three of the regular members must be of the majority party and two must be of the principal minority party. If a vacancy occurs on a board, the Governor must appoint an eligible person from the same political party as the predecessor member to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the unexpired term and until a successor is appointed and qualifies.

The bill takes effect June 6, 2011.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: Somerset County, Wicomico County, and Worcester County expenditures increase minimally each year beginning in FY 2011 due to increased costs of compensation of board members.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: Most counties have a local board of elections made up of three regular members and two substitute members (the Prince George's County board consists of five regular members and three substitute members and the

Montgomery County board consists of five regular members and two substitute members). Two regular members and one substitute member must be of the majority party and one regular member and one substitute member must be of the principal minority party.

Members are generally nominated by the majority and principal minority party county central committees and appointed by the Governor, subject to legislative confirmation. If a member of a local board dies, resigns, is removed, or becomes ineligible, the substitute member belonging to the same political party becomes a regular member of the local board and a new substitute member is appointed. The term of a member is four years and begins on the first Monday in June of each year following a gubernatorial election. Each local board must meet to elect one of its regular members president within 20 days after the beginning of the term.

Each regular member of a local board receives the salary and reimbursement of expenses provided in the county budget, but minimum amounts are set in State law for the members in each county. In Somerset County, the annual compensation of regular members may not be less than \$1,000. In Wicomico County, the annual compensation of regular members may not be less than \$2,400 for the president and \$1,800 for other regular members. In Worcester County, the annual compensation of regular members may not be less than \$1,500 for the president and \$1,200 for other regular members. Each substitute member of a board must be compensated for each day of service as provided in the county budget, consistent with certain State law requirements. Except as specifically provided for certain counties, a substitute member must be compensated at a rate of at least \$25 for each meeting of the local board that the substitute member attends. In Wicomico County, a substitute member must be paid at least \$1,200 annually.

Local Fiscal Effect: Somerset County, Wicomico County, and Worcester County expenditures increase minimally each year, beginning in fiscal 2011 (due to the bill's effective date of June 6, 2011), accounting for increased salaries paid to the two additional regular members in comparison to the salaries of the current substitute members. In Somerset County, each regular member of the Somerset County Board of Elections receives a salary of \$1,600 per year, and substitute members are paid \$800. Each regular member of the Wicomico County Board of Elections currently receives a salary of \$3,600 per year, and substitute members are paid \$2,800. Each regular member of the Worcester County Board of Elections currently receives a salary of \$1,800 per year, and substitute members are paid \$50 per meeting and \$120 per election day.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 748 (Senators Colburn and Stoltzfus) - Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs.

Information Source(s): Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester counties; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 21, 2010
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