

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2011 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

Senate Bill 975 (Senator Edwards)

Finance

Economic Matters

**Economic Development - Tri-County Council for Western Maryland -
Membership and Leadership**

This bill alters the membership and leadership of the Tri-County Council for Western Maryland and increases membership to 26. The bill also defines member counties as counties in the region that pay annual dues set by the council.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: The bill does not materially impact the finances of Allegany, Garrett, and Washington counties.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The bill alters the membership of the council and increases membership to 26 members as follows:

- six county commissioners (two from each member county);
- the director of economic development from each member county;
- two mayors from each member county or their representatives, appointed by the respective chapters of the Maryland Municipal League;
- the chair of each member county's legislative delegation to the House of Delegates or the chair's designee and reside in the member county;

- the two State Senators representing the member counties; and
- six private citizens (two from each county appointed by their respective county commissioners).

The council members who are mayors serve at the pleasure of the county commissioners for the county that the member represents.

The bill creates an executive committee consisting of a chair, vice-chair, and secretary/treasurer of the council. On a rotating basis, commissioner members of the council from each member county serve as the chair, vice-chair, and secretary/treasurer for one year. Beginning October 1, 2011, the Washington County commissioner member serves as the chair, the Allegany County commissioner member serves as the vice-chair, and the Garrett County commissioner member serves as secretary/treasurer.

Current Law: The Tri-County Council for Western Maryland comprises 23 members who are selected as follows:

- nine representatives of the county governments (three from each county, appointed by their respective county commissioners);
- three municipal elected officials (one from each county, appointed by their respective county commissioners);
- the chairman or the chairman's designee of each county's delegation to the House of Delegates;
- the two State Senators representing the region and residing in one of the three counties; and
- six private citizens (two from each county, appointed by their respective county commissioners).

A member who qualifies due to the member's elected or appointed position is a member of the council only during the member's term of office in the elected or appointed position. Private citizen council members serve at the pleasure of their respective board of county commissioners, and their term of office coincides with the term of their appointing board of county commissioners. The council elects a chair from among its members. Members may not receive compensation.

The State is required to appropriate money in the State budget to the council. The State allocation is contingent on member counties contributing matching amounts. On or before August of each year, the council is required to submit its proposed work programs and operating budget to the Department of Business and Economic Development.

Background: The Tri-County Council for Western Maryland is a regional economic development organization representing Allegany, Garrett, and Washington counties in Western Maryland. The council is governed by a Board of Directors, which includes representatives from both the public and private sectors. The council advises that it uses State and local monies received to match federal planning amounts. The council received \$73,500 in State funds in fiscal 2011. The council advises that it recently amended its bylaws to increase dues for each member county from \$25,000 for to \$40,000.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: HB 1343 (Allegany County Delegation) - Economic Matters.

Information Source(s): Garrett and Washington counties, Tri-County Council of Western Maryland, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 20, 2011
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