

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2012 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 951 (Senator Dyson)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Environmental Matters

General Assembly - Ethics Counseling

This bill requires the counsel to the Joint Committee on Legislative Ethics to, at the end of each calendar year, provide to the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House a list of the names of members from the Presiding Officer's respective chamber who have met with the counsel pursuant to an existing requirement that the counsel meet individually with each member each year to provide specified advice and assistance.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill does not affect State finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: The counsel to the Joint Committee on Legislative Ethics must meet individually with each member of the General Assembly each year to advise the member regarding the requirements of any applicable ethics law, rule, or standard of conduct and assist the member in preparing statements and reports relating to conflicts of interest that are required to be filed with the committee.

Background: Members of the General Assembly are subject to various requirements and standards relating to conflicts of interest and financial disclosure under the Maryland Public Ethics Law, including those that are broadly applicable to State government officials and/or employees, as well as certain requirements and standards specifically

applicable to members of the General Assembly. Certain statements and reports are filed by members with respect to disqualification or voluntary recusal from participation in a legislative matter due to an apparent or presumed conflict of interest and certain other circumstances that may give rise to a conflict of interest.

State law specifies that the counsel's assistance to the members of the General Assembly is subject to the attorney client privilege and specified confidentiality. It is intended as a service to the members and may not be deemed to diminish a member's personal responsibility for adherence to applicable laws, rules, and standards of ethical conduct.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): State Ethics Commission, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 29, 2012
ncs/kdm

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