

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2012 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 475 (St. Mary's County Delegation)
Rules and Executive Nominations Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

St. Mary's County - Redistricting Board - Revisions

This bill requires a redistricting board to be appointed in St. Mary's County following each decennial census of the United States.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: None. St. Mary's County can appoint a redistricting board and conduct public hearings with existing resources.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: St. Mary's County is required to appoint a redistricting board following each decennial census of the United States. A redistricting board must be appointed after January 1, 2013, and before March 1, 2013, and between January 1 and March 1 in the year following each decennial census. The board must be composed of one appointee made by each member of the board of county commissioners.

The redistricting board must propose, after due consideration and investigation, a redistricting plan drawing and defining reasonable and lawful boundaries of the four districts for the subsequent elections of county commissioners. The redistricting board may solicit the advice of academic, legal, and other experts; and may hold public forums.

After preliminary district boundaries have been drawn and defined, the redistricting board must conduct at least one public hearing in each of the four proposed commissioner districts. Notice of public hearings must be given in accordance with the requirements for public hearings by the board of county commissioners.

After public hearings have been held, the redistricting board must prepare and submit a redistricting plan to the board of county commissioners by December 31 of the year in which the redistricting board is created. Sixty days after submission of the redistricting plan to the board of county commissioners, the plan becomes the districts for the subsequent election of county commissioners in accordance with law.

Any redistricting board appointed before October 1, 2012, must be conclusively presumed to have been lawfully constituted, and any redistricting plan submitted to the board of county commissioners before that date must be conclusively presumed to have become law.

Current Law: A redistricting board was created in St. Mary's County following the 1974 general election and inauguration of the St. Mary's County Commissioners. The board consists of one appointee of each county commissioner.

The redistricting board must establish the boundaries of the four commissioner districts after due consideration and investigation within reasonable and lawful guidelines. The board must set and conduct public hearings in each of the proposed four commissioner districts after tentative district boundaries have been drawn and defined.

Notice of public hearings giving time, date, and place must be published in two county newspapers 10 days prior to the public hearings. After all public hearings have been held and a final draft of the redistricting plan has been completed, the board must submit the redistricting plan to the county commissioners within 18 months from the date of their first meeting. This plan must then become law unless the plan is set aside by a court of law with proper jurisdiction.

This method of redistricting must be in force following each general election after publication of the national decennial census.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): St. Mary's County, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 1, 2012
ncs/hlb

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