

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2014 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 845
Judiciary

(Delegate Smigiel, *et al.*)

Courts Administration - Contracts for Stenography Services - Pro Bono
Requirement

This bill requires an appellate court or a circuit court that contracts with a private entity for stenography services to require the entity to provide at least 5% of the stenography services free of charge to ensure access to court services by indigent clients.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2014.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill does not materially impact State expenditures.

Local Effect: The bill does not materially impact circuit court expenditures.

Small Business Effect: Minimal. A small business that enters into a contract for stenography services with an appellate or circuit court must provide at least 5% of the services pro bono.

Analysis

Current Law: An appellate court may appoint the law clerks, stenographers, and other full- or part-time employees it deems necessary. The judges of the circuit court for a county may appoint employees necessary to conduct the business of the court, including stenographers.

State/Local Fiscal Effect: Information regarding the extent to which appellate and circuit courts contract with private entities for stenography services was not available in

time for inclusion within this fiscal and policy note. Because the requirement is for the private entity to provide pro bono services, there is no direct impact on State or local finances. However, the Department of Legislative Services advises that to the extent that the requirement to provide pro bono services results in the renegotiation of contracts with private entities to mitigate the costs related to providing pro bono services, State and local expenditures may increase. Any increase is not anticipated to materially impact State and local expenditures.

Small Business Effect: A small business that enters into a contract to provide stenography services to a circuit or appellate court must provide at least 5% of services pro bono. Any impact related to this requirement is likely to be mitigated by increasing fees in other cases. Therefore, any impact to small businesses is expected to be minimal.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 17, 2014
ncs/kdm

Analysis by: Jennifer K. Botts

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510