

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2014 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1147  
Economic Matters

(Delegate McHale, *et al.*)

Finance

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Public Utilities - Fixed Charges for Taxicab Services - Baltimore City

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This bill authorizes a taxicab in Baltimore City to charge a fixed amount for any trip between the Maryland Port Administration's cruise terminal facilities and (1) Fort McHenry; (2) the World Trade Center Institute in Baltimore; or (3) Penn Station in Baltimore. A fixed charge is further authorized for trips by taxicab between other points within Baltimore City, as approved by the Public Service Commission (PSC).

The bill takes effect June 1, 2014.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** PSC can implement the bill with existing budgeted resources.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** Meaningful for taxicab permit holders located within Baltimore City to the extent they benefit from the ability to charge a fixed rate for certain trips.

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Analysis

**Current Law/Background:** PSC regulates taxicabs in four jurisdictions: Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Hagerstown, and Cumberland. Generally, a person must have a permit issued by PSC whenever the person operates as a taxicab business in or from a point in these locations (except for Baltimore County, which issues its own licenses while PSC otherwise regulates). A fixed charge may be made for any trip by taxicab between a point within the political subdivision in which the taxicab is normally operated and a

point outside of the political subdivision. The fixed charge must be calculated on a mileage basis that PSC approves.

Taxicabs are distinct from other forms of for-hire transportation such as a limousine or private sedan car. To “provide taxicab services” means to operate a motor vehicle for hire that, in addition to other services:

- is held out to the public as a taxicab or as providing taxicab services;
- regardless of how or when engaged, provides for-hire service between points chosen by the passenger and for a fare that is based on the distance traveled, time elapsed, or both; or
- is engaged by the passenger for service between points chosen by the passenger that is provided through a hail from the street or other location or a request made at a taxi stand or other location where the motor vehicle is standing and waiting for a request for service.

There are approximately 1,150 permitted taxicabs in Baltimore City.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** SB 356 (Senator Ferguson) - Finance.

**Information Source(s):** Public Service Commission, Office of People’s Counsel, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 10, 2014  
ncs/lgc

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Analysis by: Stephen M. Ross

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