

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2015 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 60

(Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee)(By Request -  
Maryland Judicial Conference)

Judicial Proceedings

Judiciary

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Clerks of the Circuit Courts - Collection of Appearance Fees

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This bill clarifies that if more than one stockholder, partner, member, or employee of an entity engaged in practicing law enters an appearance in an action or case, the clerk of the circuit court may collect only one appearance fee per entity. If more than one employee of a governmental entity that has consented to the assessment of court fees enters an appearance in an action or case, the clerk of the circuit court may assess only one appearance fee per governmental entity.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** None.

**Local Effect:** The bill does not materially impact local government finances.

**Small Business Effect:** Minimal.

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Analysis

**Current Law:** The clerk of the circuit court for each county, other than Montgomery County, is charged with collecting fees for docketing the appearance of counsel. Generally, the fee is \$10 when bringing or defending a civil action in court, prosecuting or defending a criminal action, or bringing or defending a case in the Court of Appeals. The fee varies in Baltimore City and Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, and St. Mary's counties. Pursuant to statutory requirements, appearance fees are generally used for the law libraries within the circuit courts. Some counties allow for other uses,

such as for the assignment office and the general maintenance and improvement of the court's facilities and equipment.

The State Court Administrator must determine the amount of all court costs and charges for the circuit courts of the counties with the approval of the Board of Public Works. The clerk may not charge the State, or any county, municipality, or Baltimore City any fees as set forth in specified statutory provisions unless the governmental entity first gives its consent.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** HB 48 (Chair, Judiciary Committee)(By Request - Maryland Judicial Conference) - Judiciary.

**Information Source(s):** Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts), Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - January 29, 2015  
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