

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2016 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

House Bill 413

(Delegate Carr, *et al.*)

Health and Government Operations

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Maryland General Assembly - Pilot Program on Closed Captioning for Video Streaming

This bill requires the Office of Information Systems (OIS) within the Department of Legislative Services (DLS) to establish a Pilot Program on Closed Captioning for Video Streaming. The stated purpose of the pilot program is to determine an efficient and cost-effective process for providing the public with closed captioning for live and archived video streaming on the Maryland General Assembly (MGA) website. The bill establishes requirements for the pilot program during the 2017 session and a related reporting requirement for OIS.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2016, and terminates June 30, 2018.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures for DLS increase by \$40,000 in fiscal 2017 only for contractual services to install the hardware and software needed for OIS to conduct the pilot program during the 2017 session. Revenues are not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	40,000	0	0	0	0
Net Effect	(\$40,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Note:() = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate effect

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: During the 2017 session, the pilot program must allow for the testing of a process for providing the public with closed captioning for live and archived video of meetings conducted in two standing committee rooms. By October 1, 2017, OIS must report to specified legislative committees on the results of the testing and whether the process may be applied to other live and archived videos streamed on the MGA website.

Current Law/Background: Under Maryland's Open Meetings Act, with limited exceptions, a "public body" must (1) provide adequate notice of the time and location of meetings and (2) meet in open session in a location that is reasonably accessible to attendees. A public body is any entity that (1) consists of at least two individuals and (2) is created by the Maryland Constitution; a State statute; a county or municipal charter; a memorandum of understanding or a master agreement to which a majority of the county boards of education and the Maryland State Department of Education are signatories; an ordinance; a rule, resolution, or bylaw; or an executive order of the Governor or of the chief executive authority of a political subdivision. Exclusions from the definition of "public body" include juries, the Governor's cabinet and Executive Council, judicial nominating commissions, and single-member entities, among others.

All floor and standing committee meetings in both the Senate and the House of Delegates are subject to the Open Meetings Act. Thus, they are open to the public and must be published in the MGA's meeting schedule. Live and archived video streaming is available for all public hearings held by standing committees of the House of Delegates and the Senate. In addition, while live and archived audio streaming is available for floor sessions of both chambers, neither chamber is equipped with video-streaming equipment. All live and archived video and audio are available on the MGA website.

DLS is required to develop, coordinate, support, and maintain computer services and information systems for the General Assembly. It must provide computer training for General Assembly employees and plan for the future information systems needs of the General Assembly.

State Expenditures: General fund expenditures for DLS increase by \$40,000 in fiscal 2017 only for contractual services to make hardware and software upgrades in two standing committee rooms in order to conduct the pilot program during the 2017 session. This estimate assumes that the cost of the upgrades is \$20,000 per committee room. OIS can conduct the testing and submit the required report using existing resources.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 23, 2016
md/lgc Revised - House Third Reader - March 29, 2016

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