

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2016 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 654
Finance

(Senator Salling, *et al.*)

Maryland Transportation Authority - Membership

This bill adds four additional members to the Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA): two from the Senate, appointed by the Senate President, and two from the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of the House. These members serve in a nonvoting, advisory capacity only. Appointed members from each chamber must include one representative from the majority party and one representative from the minority party. Appointed members must represent a legislative district that includes a transportation facilities project; however, if no member of the Senate or the House of Delegates meets that requirement, the Senate President, Speaker of the House, or minority leader, depending on the type of opening, may appoint a member to fill the opening. The bill also establishes other procedures for filling specified vacancies. A legislative member of MDTA may not receive compensation but is entitled to reimbursement for travel expenses.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Any increase in expense reimbursements due to the additional members can be handled with existing resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: Since 1971, MDTA has been responsible for constructing, managing, operating, and improving the State's toll facilities and for financing new revenue-producing transportation projects. MDTA is governed by nine individuals appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate. The Secretary of

Transportation serves as MDTA's chairman. The appointed members must reflect the racial, gender, and geographic diversity of the population of the State. Members serve four-year terms and are entitled to compensation and reimbursement for expenses.

MDTA transportation facilities projects include:

- bridges, tunnels, and toll highways;
- vehicle parking facilities located in priority funding areas;
- other projects that MDTA authorizes to be acquired or constructed; and
- any authorized additions or improvements to MDTA projects.

MDTA has the authority to set tolls on transportation facilities projects under its supervision. Tolls must provide funds that, when combined with bond proceeds and other available revenues, are sufficient to pay maintenance, repair, and operating costs for transportation facilities projects that are not otherwise paid for; pay the interest and principal of any outstanding bond issues; create reasonable reserves for these purposes; and provide funds for the cost of replacements, renewals, and improvements. Toll revenues are deposited into the Transportation Authority Fund, which is wholly separate from the Transportation Trust Fund.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: SB 377 of 2015 received a hearing in the Senate Finance Committee, but no further action was taken. Its cross file, HB 639, received an unfavorable report from the House Environment and Transportation Committee.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Transportation, Department of Legislative Services

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kb/lgc

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