

Department of Legislative Services  
 Maryland General Assembly  
 2017 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
 First Reader

House Bill 933 (Delegate Szeliga, *et al.*)  
 Rules and Executive Nominations

General Assembly - Live and Archived Video Streaming of Meetings

This bill requires that the General Assembly make available to the public live and archived video streaming of all of meetings of the Senate, the House of Delegates, and standing committees, including committee hearings.

Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** General fund expenditures for the Department of Legislative Services (DLS) increase by at least \$1.2 million in FY 2018 for hardware, installation, and staffing costs associated with the bill’s requirement to provide video streaming of floor sessions in the Senate and House of Delegates chambers. Future year expenditures reflect annualization and ongoing maintenance costs. Revenues are not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	1,203,000	424,700	441,400	458,800	477,300
Net Effect	(\$1,203,000)	(\$424,700)	(\$441,400)	(\$458,800)	(\$477,300)

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

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

Analysis

**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.

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.

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 General Assembly’s meeting schedule. Live and archived video streaming is available for all standing committee meetings of the House of Delegates and the Senate. Standing committees do not currently stream video of voting sessions. 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 General Assembly website. Downloading is not enabled.

**State Expenditures:** General fund expenditures for DLS increase by at least \$1,203,048 in fiscal 2018, which accounts for the bill’s October 1, 2017 effective date. This estimate reflects the cost of hiring four audiovisual technicians to operate video cameras and microphones in the two chambers. It includes salaries, fringe benefits, one-time start-up costs to add video recording capability to the two chambers (including costs for microphones, video cameras, wiring, hardware, and installation), and ongoing operating costs.

Positions	4
Salaries and Fringe Benefits	\$282,613
Equipment and Installation	918,560
Other Operating Expenses	<u>1,875</u>
<b>Minimum FY 2018 State Expenditures</b>	<b>\$1,203,048</b>

Future year expenditures reflect full salaries with annual increases and employee turnover and ongoing operating expenses, including equipment maintenance.

DLS notes that costs could be higher if additional modifications to the chambers are required by the State House Historic Trust to accommodate the installation of video cameras.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** HB 316 of 2016 and HB 177 of 2014, both similar bills, each received a hearing in the House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee, but no further action was taken on either bill.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 2, 2017  
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