

**Department of Legislative Services**  
 Maryland General Assembly  
 2017 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**First Reader**

House Bill 278 (Delegate Moon, *et al.*)  
 Rules and Executive Nominations

**General Assembly Standing Committees - Posting of Written Testimony on Web Site**

This bill requires the Department of Legislative Services (DLS) to publish on the General Assembly website the written testimony for each bill or resolution reported to the floor by a standing committee of the General Assembly within 120 days after the committee’s voting session on the bill or resolution. Before reporting a bill to the floor, the standing committee must deliver any written testimony related to a bill or resolution to DLS. Testimony published on the General Assembly website must be linked to the related bill or resolution.

**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** General fund expenditures by DLS increase by \$16,800 in FY 2018 for the one-time purchase of additional equipment to scan and upload written testimony on the General Assembly website. Additional costs may be incurred in future years, as discussed below. Revenues are not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	16,800	-	-	-	-
Net Effect	(\$16,800)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

*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:** Generally, a standing committee, in carrying out any of its functions or powers, may (1) issue subpoenas; (2) compel the attendance of witnesses; (3) compel the production of any papers, books, accounts, documents, and testimony; (4) administer oaths; and (5) cause the depositions of witnesses, who reside in or outside of the State, to be taken in the manner provided by law for taking depositions in a civil case.

**Background:** Live and archived video streaming is available for all public hearings held by standing committees of the House of Delegates and the Senate. Standing committee votes are published on the General Assembly website after a bill is reported out of a standing committee. Written testimony is not normally available online; for each legislative session, General Assembly standing committees receive thousands of pages of written testimony on the bills they consider. Standing committees retain written testimony in committee files for one or two years at which time they transfer the files, including written testimony, to the DLS library. The library maintains files with written testimony dating back to 1975 either on microfilm or in hard copy. The public can view committee files in the library by request or receive up to 35 pages of material electronically or in print. Files from the 1970s through the 1990s are on microfilm.

**State Expenditures:** General fund expenditures by DLS increase by \$16,800 in fiscal 2018 to purchase high-volume scanning equipment and to be trained on its proper use in order to implement the bill's document uploading requirements. This estimate assumes that the uploading could be performed after the conclusion of the legislative session and still meet the bill's 120-day deadline. The Library and Information Services within DLS advises that it can use its existing contractual employees during the legislative interim to collect, organize, scan, and upload all written testimony received by each standing committee during the legislative session.

Additional expenditures may occur in future years depending on whether or not operational adjustments are needed. For example, if the volume of written testimony requires staff to process documents *during* the legislative session, additional contractual staff and office space are necessary.

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## Additional Information

**Prior Introductions:** SB 628 of 2016, a similar bill, received an unfavorable report from the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee.

**Cross File:** Although SB 391 (Senators Hershey and Smith - Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs) is designated as a cross file, it is not identical.

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

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