

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2018 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

House Bill 554

(Caroline County Delegation)

Environment and Transportation

Judicial Proceedings

Caroline County, Dorchester County, and Kent County – Sheriffs’ Salaries

This bill alters the salary of the sheriff in Caroline, Dorchester, and Kent counties by establishing that the salary is to be equal to 80% of the annual salary of the State’s Attorneys for the respective counties. Pursuant to constitutional requirements, the salary increases take effect at the beginning of the next term of office.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: Annual salary expenditures increase in Caroline, Dorchester, and Kent counties beginning in FY 2019, as discussed below. Local revenues are not affected.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: The Caroline County Sheriff receives an annual salary of \$80,000. The Dorchester County Sheriff receives an annual salary of \$89,500. The Kent County Sheriff receives an annual salary of \$85,000. The salary of the State’s Attorney in each of the three counties is \$113,066, which is set at 80% of the salary of a District Court judge (\$141,333 in fiscal 2018). **Exhibit 1** shows the salary for the sheriff in each county based on fiscal 2018 data, as provided by the Maryland Association of Counties.

Exhibit 1
Sheriff Salaries
Fiscal 2018

| County | Salary |
|-----------------|---------------|
| Allegany | \$74,263 |
| Anne Arundel | 132,999 |
| Baltimore City | 132,600 |
| Baltimore | 90,000 |
| Calvert | 90,480 |
| Caroline | 80,000 |
| Carroll | 90,001 |
| Cecil | 79,675 |
| Charles | 143,036 |
| Dorchester | 89,500 |
| Frederick | 125,000 |
| Garrett | 85,000 |
| Harford | 120,086 |
| Howard | 94,000 |
| Kent | 85,000 |
| Montgomery | 161,495 |
| Prince George's | 154,333 |
| Queen Anne's | 132,000 |
| St. Mary's | 104,040 |
| Somerset | 60,000 |
| Talbot | 81,954 |
| Washington | 100,000 |
| Wicomico | 95,000 |
| Worcester | 88,000 |

Source: Maryland Association of Counties

Article III, § 35 of the Maryland Constitution prohibits the salary or compensation of any public officer from being increased or diminished during the individual's term of office, except those whose full term is fixed by law in excess of four years. According to a Letter from the Counsel to the General Assembly, dated January 17, 1978, salary increases that are to be implemented over a period of time are permissible if implemented before the beginning of the term.

Local Expenditures: As noted above, in each of the impacted counties, the salary of the State’s Attorney is equal to 80% of the salary of a District Court judge. Pursuant to House Joint Resolution 3 of 2018, judicial salaries increase by \$5,000 each year in fiscal 2019 through 2022; therefore, the salaries of the State’s Attorneys also increase in each of these years. Accordingly, the salary for the sheriff in each of the counties affected by the bill also increases incrementally during the same time period.

Caroline County expenditures increase by (1) \$9,557 in fiscal 2019; (2) \$20,224 in fiscal 2020; (3) 24,064 in fiscal 2021; and (4) a minimum of \$27,904 annually thereafter. The estimate includes fringe benefits.

Dorchester County expenditures increase by (1) \$2,423 in fiscal 2019; (2) \$7,353 in fiscal 2020; (3) \$10,553 in fiscal 2021; and (4) a minimum of \$13,753 annually thereafter. The estimate does not include any impact on fringe benefits.

Kent County expenditures increase by (1) \$5,754 in fiscal 2019; (2) \$13,513 in fiscal 2020; (3) \$17,161 in fiscal 2021; and (4) a minimum of \$20,809 annually thereafter. The estimate includes fringe benefits.

Each of the estimates assumes that the next term of office begins December 2018. The estimates are also based on scheduled salary increases through fiscal 2022 only. To the extent that judicial salaries are increased in the future, thereby increasing the salary of the State’s Attorneys, expenditures increase further.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 436 (Caroline County Senators) - Judicial Proceedings.

Information Source(s): Caroline and Kent counties; Maryland Association of Counties; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 7, 2018
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