

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2020 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

House Bill 162

(Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee)(By
Request - Departmental - Transportation)

Environment and Transportation

Finance

Transportation - Potomac River Bridges Towing Compact - Inclusion of
Additional Bridges

This departmental bill includes the Governor Harry W. Nice/Senator Thomas “Mac” Middleton Bridge, the Sandy Hook Bridge, the Brunswick Bridge, the Point of Rocks Bridge, and the Arland D. Williams, Jr. Memorial Bridge in the State’s Potomac River Bridges Towing Compact with the Commonwealth of Virginia and the District of Columbia. **The bill takes effect June 1, 2020, but is contingent on a similar Act being enacted by the Commonwealth of Virginia and the District of Columbia.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill does not materially affect State operations or finances.

Local Effect: The bill does not materially affect local operations or finances.

Small Business Effect: The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) has determined that this bill has minimal or no impact on small business (attached). The Department of Legislative Services concurs with this assessment. (The attached assessment does not reflect amendments to the bill.)

Analysis

Current Law: The Potomac River Bridges Towing Compact generally authorizes law enforcement officers from each of the signatory jurisdictions (Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, DC) to order the removal of disabled and abandoned vehicles from the bridges specified in the compact.

The compact applies to the Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge, the Rochambeau Memorial Bridge, the George Mason Memorial Bridge, the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Bridge, the Francis Scott Key Bridge, the Chain Bridge, and the American Legion Bridge. Each of the listed bridges passes through at least two of the jurisdictions' territories.

Background: MDOT advises that the compact addresses the need for concurrent law enforcement jurisdiction on the listed bridges between Maryland and Virginia to facilitate the quick clearance of disabled vehicles that would otherwise cause significant traffic problems. The compact expedites the resolution of these issues, as a police officer from either side of an affected bridge can get to the scene and take corrective action, even if the scene is technically not in the officer's jurisdiction.

The bill expands the compact to apply to (1) four additional bridges between Maryland and Virginia and (2) one additional bridge between Virginia and Washington, DC. MDOT advises that Virginia has already passed the legislation necessary to enact the compact change for the bridges between Maryland and Virginia and that Washington, DC, is currently considering the necessary legislation. MDOT also advises that the bill essentially codifies current practice with respect to the bridges between Maryland and Virginia, as law enforcement already treats those bridges as being part of the compact.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of State Police; Charles and Frederick counties; Maryland Association of Counties; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 28, 2020
rh/lgc Third Reader - March 15, 2020
Revised - Amendment(s) - March 15, 2020

Analysis by: Richard L. Duncan

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510

ANALYSIS OF ECONOMIC IMPACT ON SMALL BUSINESSES

TITLE OF BILL: Transportation - Potomac River Bridges Towing Compact -
Inclusion of Additional Bridges

BILL NUMBER: HB 162

PREPARED BY: Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway
Administration/ Maryland Transportation Authority

PART A. ECONOMIC IMPACT RATING

This agency estimates that the proposed bill:

 X WILL HAVE MINIMAL OR NO ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND SMALL
BUSINESS

OR

 WILL HAVE MEANINGFUL ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND SMALL
BUSINESSES

PART B. ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

See attached fiscal note.

IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

By expanding the bridges impacted by the current towing compact, faster clearance by law enforcement officials will free up clogged arteries for easier movement in and out of business and residential areas.