

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2022 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

House Bill 381

(Delegate Solomon)

Environment and Transportation

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Municipalities – Charter Amendments – Notice

This bill modifies the manner in which a chief executive officer of a municipality may deliver charter amendment notices by authorizing the publishing of a fair summary of the proposed amendment in a newspaper of general circulation in the municipality at least once and delivering a copy of a fair summary of the proposed charter amendment by hand or by mail once to every residence in the municipality, as specified.

The fair summary of the proposed charter amendment which is delivered by hand or by mail may be included in a *printed* newsletter or other regular municipal publication. The bill requires a municipality to maintain records in accordance with the municipality's record retention policies and make these records available to the general public in accordance with the Maryland Public Information Act.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: The bill does not materially affect municipal expenditures. Municipal revenues are not affected.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Title 4, Subtitle 3 of the Local Government Article describes the powers granted to municipalities to amend or repeal their charters under Article XI-E of the

Maryland Constitution and establishes the requirements that municipal government officials must adhere to in notifying the public of a proposed charter amendment.

Municipal charter amendments may be initiated by the legislative body of a municipality or by a petition of qualified voters, as specified.

Notification of Charter Amendments Initiated by Legislative Body

The chief executive officer of a municipality must provide notice of a resolution that proposes a municipal charter amendment by posting an exact copy of the resolution at the main municipal building or other public place for 40 days after the resolution is adopted and by publishing a fair summary of the proposed amendment in a newspaper, as specified.

Notification of Charter Amendments Initiated by a Petition of Qualified Voters

The chief executive officer of a municipality must provide notice of a municipal charter amendment by posting an exact copy of the proposed amendment at the main municipal building or other public place for at least four weeks immediately preceding the referendum at which the question is to be submitted and on the day of the referendum by posting a copy of the amendment at the voting place. The chief executive officer must also publish notice of the referendum and a fair summary of the proposed amendment in a newspaper, as specified.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Designated Cross File: SB 368 (Senator Waldstreicher) - Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs.

Information Source(s): City of Frederick; City of Havre de Grace; Maryland Municipal League; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 4, 2022
km/tso Third Reader - March 29, 2022
Revised - Amendment(s) - March 29, 2022

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