

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2023 Session

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

Senate Bill 539

(Charles County Senators)

Finance

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**Economic Development – Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland –  
Membership**

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This bill adds voting members to the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland based on the populations of Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's counties. Specifically, one voting member is added to the council for every 45,000 residents in each county, as determined by the most recent decennial census. Each member must be a resident of the county and is appointed by the respective county commissioners.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None.

**Local Effect:** Adding additional voting members to the council does not materially affect local government finances or operations. Based on the most recent census, the bill adds two members from Calvert County, three members from Charles County, and two members from St. Mary's County.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** The Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland is one of five rural regional planning and development councils in the State. The purposes of the council are to foster the physical, economic, and social development of the region and effectively use the assistance provided to the region by the State. The council initiates and coordinates plans and projects for the development of human and economic resources of the region as a planning and development unit for southern Maryland. The council consists of:

- the members of the General Assembly representing the region, as voting members;
- the commissioners of Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's counties, as voting members;
- one voting member appointed by the president of the Southern Maryland Municipal Association;
- one voting member at large from each county, appointed by the commissioners of the county with the concurrence of the members of the General Assembly representing the county;
- one nonvoting member from each county, appointed jointly by the economic development commission and the planning and zoning commission of the county; and
- one nonvoting member appointed by the Department of Commerce and the Maryland Department of Planning.

A member of the council is not entitled to compensation as a member of the council. The council must hire an executive director and may employ a staff and retain professional consultants. The State and Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's counties jointly finance the council and its activities each year, subject to specified local funding minimums and a State funding mandate.

**Additional Comments:** Each of the three counties has experienced population growth in recent years. The number of voting members is likely to increase from the amounts described above based on the next decennial census – particularly for Charles County.

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## Additional Information

**Prior Introductions:** Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

**Designated Cross File:** HB 1037 (Charles County Delegation) - Environment and Transportation.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Commerce; Charles and St. Mary's counties; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 16, 2023  
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