

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2025 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 832 (Senator Charles)
Education, Energy, and the Environment

Prince George's County - District Council Zoning Laws - Override by Municipal Corporation

This bill authorizes a municipality in Prince George's County that is in the Maryland-Washington Regional District to override a zoning law made by the district council if the zoning law affects land within the jurisdiction of the municipality. An action by a municipality to override a zoning law must be by a majority vote of the members of the governing body of the municipality.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill does not directly affect State finances.

Local Effect: Prince George's County, the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), and municipalities in the regional district in the county, may be affected, as discussed below.

Small Business Effect: Potential meaningful.

Analysis

Current Law:

Maryland-Washington Regional District

Division II of the Land Use Article (within which the bill's changes are made) establishes M-NCPPC (made up of the Montgomery and Prince George's County planning boards) and governs planning and zoning within the Maryland-Washington Regional District

(§ [20-101](#) of the Land Use Article), which consists of (1) the entire area of Montgomery County, subject to certain limitations (relating to certain municipalities not subject to the planning and zoning authority of the county, unless by agreement, and other municipalities that have certain, limited planning and zoning authority) and (2) the entire area of Prince George’s County, except for the City of Laurel as it existed on July 1, 2013.

District Councils

The county councils of Montgomery and Prince George’s counties are the district councils for that portion of the regional district located within the respective counties. The district councils have the authority to adopt and amend the zoning law and any map for the portion of the regional district within the counties.

Municipalities in the Regional District in Prince George’s County

A municipality in Prince George’s County that is in the regional district may not exercise any powers relating to planning, subdivision control, or zoning, though the district council may delegate certain powers to the governing body of a municipality (under § [25-301](#)) and a municipality, under certain circumstances, may impose stricter or additional conditions, restrictions, or limitations than are otherwise applicable to fences, residential parking, and residential storage, and may authorize fences that exceed otherwise applicable height restrictions or limitations, subject to approval by the district council (under § [25-303](#)).

Within the regional district, the zoning powers vested by Division I of the Land Use Article in a municipality or the council of a municipality must be construed to be vested exclusively in the district council of Prince George’s County. A municipality in Prince George’s County has concurrent jurisdiction with the county to enforce zoning laws in the boundaries of the municipality.

Local Fiscal Effect: Prince George’s County, M-NCPPC, and municipalities within the regional district in the county may be affected; however, the extent of any impact cannot be reliably estimated, due in part to inability to predict or determine (1) the extent of municipalities’ use of the authority under the bill; (2) the significance and character of zoning laws overridden under the bill; and (3) the effect of a municipality overriding a zoning law under the bill (*e.g.*, whether the municipality or district council replaces the overridden zoning law).

Small Business Effect: Small businesses within municipalities in the regional district in Prince George’s County, and any small business involved in development within those municipalities, may be meaningfully affected by a municipality’s use of the authority under the bill, to the extent the use of the authority affects the level and character of development in the municipality.

Additional Information

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

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission; Maryland Department of Planning; City of Greenbelt; Department of Legislative Services

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