

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2014 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 414 (Senator Kelley, *et al.*)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

General Assembly - Legislative Redistricting - Plans to be Introduced as a Bill

This proposed constitutional amendment, if approved by the voters at the next general election, would require the Governor to introduce his proposed legislative redistricting plan as a bill for consideration by the General Assembly. It also allows any member of the General Assembly to introduce a legislative redistricting plan as a bill for consideration by the General Assembly. Following a public hearing in each House, the General Assembly must adopt a legislative redistricting bill and present it to the Governor to be signed or vetoed.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. Any increase in staffing and equipment for the Department of Legislative Services (DLS) can be absorbed within resources normally budgeted for redistricting years. It is assumed that the potential for increased costs to include any constitutional amendments proposed by the General Assembly on the ballot at the next general election will have been anticipated in the State Board of Elections' budget. No effect on revenues.

Local Effect: None. It is assumed that the potential for increased costs to notify voters of any constitutional amendments proposed by the General Assembly, and to include any proposed constitutional amendments on the ballot at the next general election, will have been anticipated in local boards of elections' budgets.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: The Maryland Constitution requires the Governor to present a legislative districting plan to the General Assembly as a joint resolution by the first day of session in the second year following the decennial census and after public hearings. The General Assembly may, by joint resolution, adopt its own legislative redistricting plan. If the General Assembly adopts its plan by the forty-fifth day of the legislative session, that plan becomes law. If the General Assembly does not pass its plan by the forty-fifth day, the Governor's plan becomes law.

Background: By practice since 1981, there has been an advisory committee appointed by the Governor to formulate proposed changes and adjustments to the State legislative districts. The five-member committee appointed during the 2011 interim set the legal and policy guidelines it used in formulating a redistricting plan and received input from legislators, community organizations, and the general public through a series of public hearings held throughout the State in the summer and fall of 2011. DLS provided staff support to the General Assembly for the redistricting endeavor, including the drafting of alternative redistricting plans and the preparation of maps and reports of data.

The Governor's Districting Plan of 2012, introduced as identical joint resolutions in both the House and the Senate on January 11, 2012, became law on February 24, 2012, without action by the General Assembly. Although several alternative redistricting plans were prepared and introduced as joint resolutions during the session, none passed.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Governor's Office, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 27, 2014
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