

Department of Legislative Services

Maryland General Assembly

2017 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Third Reader - Revised

House Bill 446

(Charles County Delegation)(By Request)

Appropriations

Finance

Charles County - Collective Bargaining for Public Safety Officials

This bill includes Charles County in the definition of “employer” with respect to collective bargaining for public safety officials so that Charles County has the authority to enact a local law or ordinance to permit voluntary collective bargaining between the county and an employee organization exclusively representing fire, emergency medical service (EMS), paramedic, or rescue employees that are hired or compensated by the county. It also specifies that a memorandum of understanding that results from collective bargaining between Charles County and an exclusive representative is subject to Charles County’s laws, regulations, or policies concerning budgetary and fiscal procedures.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill only affects Charles County.

Local Effect: Charles County expenditures may increase depending on salary and benefits packages that are developed through any collective bargaining agreements. Additionally, Charles County expenditures may increase by approximately \$25,000 for legal counsel in years when mediation or arbitration takes place. County revenues are not affected.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: A charter county or municipality has the authority to enact a local law or ordinance to permit voluntary collective bargaining between the charter county or municipality and an employee organization exclusively representing fire, EMS, paramedic, or rescue employees that are hired or compensated by the charter county or municipality.

Sworn law enforcement officers and correctional officers at or below the rank of sergeant of the Charles County Sheriff's Office may seek recognition to organize and collectively bargain in good faith with the county commissioners and the sheriff concerning merit step increases (deputies only), salary and wages (correctional officers only), and those benefits determined, offered, administered, controlled, or managed by the county commissioners. Resolutions or adjustments of specified disputes may not be inconsistent with the terms of a collective bargaining agreement.

Local Fiscal Effect: Charles County advises that approximately 77 full-time merit system employees whose primary duties include providing EMS, fire operations, or rescue operations for the Charles County Department of Emergency Services are eligible to be represented by an exclusive representative under the bill. Because the bill authorizes these employees to bargain collectively over the terms and conditions of employment, the county may incur additional expenditures in future years depending on future collective bargaining agreements, if any. These expenditures cannot be reliably estimated and depend on the wage and benefits packages that are developed for these employees if they choose to be represented by an exclusive representative.

In years when arbitration or mediation occurs, Charles County expenditures may increase by approximately \$25,000 to hire outside legal counsel to represent the county during the collective bargaining process.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 909 (Charles County Senators)(By Request) - Finance.

Information Source(s): Charles County; Department of Budget and Management; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 12, 2017
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