

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2017 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader

House Bill 476

(Chair, Judiciary Committee)(By Request - Maryland
Judicial Conference)

Judiciary

Judicial Proceedings

District Court Commissioners - Residency in Contiguous County

This bill authorizes District Court Commissioners to serve in counties contiguous to the counties in which they reside.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Although the bill is intended to benefit operations within the District Court, as discussed below, any such impact is not anticipated to materially affect the finances of the Judiciary.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: District Court Commissioners must be adult residents of the counties in which they serve but are not required to be lawyers. Each commissioner holds office at the pleasure of the Chief Judge of the District Court and has the powers and duties as prescribed by law.

Under § 1-107 of the General Provisions Article, “county” is defined to mean a county of the State of Maryland or Baltimore City.

Background: The Judiciary advises that the bill is likely to significantly benefit District Court operations in a number of ways. For example, it is anticipated to (1) expand the pool

of applicants for vacant commissioner positions; (2) expedite the hiring process by allowing for a perpetual pool of applicants who can fill positions in multiple counties as openings become available; and (3) assist in the retention of commissioners, as commissioners are able to move to contiguous counties without resigning. These improvements are expected to reduce times during which commissioners must work double shifts or offices are understaffed.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 746 (Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee)(By Request - Maryland Judicial Conference) - Judicial Proceedings.

Information Source(s): Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts); Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 20, 2017
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