

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2007 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
 Revised

House Bill 1034 (Delegate Oaks, *et al.*)

Health and Government Operations

Finance

Maryland Healthy Places Act

This bill requires the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene to establish a health impact assessment pilot program subject to the availability and appropriation of funding.

The bill takes effect June 1, 2007.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) general fund expenditures would increase by \$80,000 in FY 2008 to award health assessment grants. Future year expenditures reflect \$100,000 in grants awarded annually to maintain a viable program.

(in dollars)	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	80,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
Net Effect	(\$80,000)	(\$100,000)	(\$100,000)	(\$100,000)	(\$100,000)

Note:() = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate effect

Local Effect: Local government revenues and community organization revenues could increase for those that receive DHMH grants to conduct health assessment activities. No effect on expenditures.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary:

Health Impact Assessment Grant

The Secretary must establish a pilot program that provides funding and technical assistance to prepare health impact assessments. The purpose of the public health impact assessments is to • facilitate State and local health official involvement in community planning and land use decisions to identify any potential health concern relating to an activity or proposed activity; • provide for an investigation of any health-related issue addressed in an environmental impact statement or policy appraisal relating to an activity or a proposed activity; • describe and compare alternatives to an activity or proposed activity; and • contribute to the findings of an environmental impact statement with respect to the terms and conditions of implementing an activity or proposed activity, as necessary.

The Secretary may collaborate with specified State departments, or any other State agency the Secretary deems appropriate, in developing the guidance for the assessment of potential health effects of land use, housing, and transportation policy and plans.

Program grants will be awarded to a unit of local government with jurisdiction of individuals or populations whose health will be affected by an activity or proposed activity. The assessments conducted must evaluate the effect of modifications of the physical or social environment on public health and social and economic development.

Environmental Health Assessment Activities Grant

The environmental health improvement activities pilot program must award grants to a specified State or local community to conduct environmental health improvement activities that promote environmental health and address environmental health disparities.

Reporting Requirement

By December 31, 2007, and every year thereafter, the Secretary must report to the Governor and the General Assembly on the bill's activities.

Current Law: The Commission on Environmental Justice and Sustainable Communities must advise State agencies on environmental justice and related community issues; review and analyze the impact of current State policy, laws, and regulations on environmental justice and sustainable communities; coordinate with the Children's

Environmental Health and Protection Advisory Council on environmental justice and sustainable communities recommendations; develop criteria to assess whether communities may be experiencing environmental justice issues; and recommend options to the Governor for addressing issues, concerns, or problems surfacing through the review process, prioritizing areas of the State which are targets for immediate action.

Background: The bill is based on federal legislation, H.R. 398, introduced January 10, 2007, that requires the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish an interagency working group to discuss environmental health concerns, particularly concerns disproportionately affecting disadvantaged populations. The federal bill would require the Secretary, acting through the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), to establish a program at the National Center of Environmental Health at CDC to advance the field of health impact assessment. The director would be required to develop guidance for the assessment of potential health effects of land use, housing, and transportation policy and plans.

Additionally, the federal bill requires the establishment of a program to provide funding and technical assistance to state or local governments affected or potentially affected by an activity or proposed activity to prepare health impact assessments. Additionally, it would require the establishment and maintenance of a health impact assessment database.

It also would establish a grant program to award grants to state or local communities for environmental health improvement activities.

State Effect: General fund expenditures would increase by \$80,000 in fiscal 2008 to award four grants at an average of \$10,000 per grant to local health departments and four grants at an average of \$10,000 per grant to community organizations to establish a viable program. Existing DHMH staff could award the eight grants in fiscal 2008 and write the required report. This analysis assumes that any State department or other State agency DHMH collaborates with regarding the bill's implementation can collaborate with DHMH using existing budgeted resources.

Future years assume \$100,000 in general fund expenditures annually as DHMH awards five grants at an average of \$10,000 per grant to local health departments and five grants at an average of \$10,000 per grant to community organizations to maintain a viable program. It is assumed that existing staff could award and monitor 10 grants annually.

Local Revenues: Local government revenues could increase beginning in fiscal 2008 for those awarded grants to conduct health impact assessments. Community organizations would receive environmental health improvement activities grants. In fiscal 2008, a total of \$80,000 in grants could be awarded statewide to both units of local governments and

community organizations. Future years assume \$100,000 in grants awarded annually to units of local governments and community organizations.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Department of Legislative Services

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