

Department of Fiscal Services
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE
Revised

House Bill 304 (Delegate Morhaim, et al.)
Economic Matters

Referred to Finance

Task Force to Examine the State's Cemetery and Funeral Industry

This enrolled bill creates a 25-member Task Force to Examine the State's Cemetery and Funeral Industry. The task force's scope includes an assessment of the regulations of the funeral industry, the costs of funerals to consumers, the costs to the State and local governments for the burial of indigent individuals, the religious needs of customers, and the reinterment of remains that are discovered in the development of property. In addition, the task force must identify small businesses in the funeral and burial industries and assess the issues facing these businesses. The task force also must develop recommendations for methods to reduce funeral costs; to increase consumer awareness and involvement with the funeral industry; to encourage early decision making regarding burial needs; to provide information to consumers about available goods, services, and prices; to educate the funeral industry about the religious needs of customers; and to properly reinter the remains of individuals discovered in the development of property. The Department of Legislative Reference will provide the necessary staff support to the task force.

The task force must submit a report by January 1, 1997 to the Governor and the General Assembly.

The task force terminates on January 1, 1997. The bill is effective June 1, 1996.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Expense reimbursements are assumed to be minimal and able to be absorbed within existing resources. Revenues would not be affected.

Local Effect: None.

Fiscal Analysis

State Expenditures: It is assumed that task force members would be eligible for expense reimbursements according to the standard State travel regulations. Expense reimbursements would depend upon the time, location, and frequency of the task force's meetings. It is expected that reimbursements for the six legislators and the six representatives from State agencies could be handled with existing budgeted resources of the affected agencies. As a result, 13 members of the task force could entail additional general fund expenditures for travel expenses. These expenditures are assumed to be minimal and could be handled with the Executive Department's existing resources.

The Department of Legislative Reference could staff the task force with existing resources.

Information Source(s): Office of the Governor, Department of Legislative Reference, Department of Fiscal Services

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