

Department of Fiscal Services
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 1293 (Delegate C. Davis)
Judiciary

Parole - Eligibility for Life Sentences - Repeal of Governor's Approval

This bill repeals the requirement that the Governor approve parole of a person sentenced to life imprisonment.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Potential minimal general fund expenditure savings for the Division of Correction. Revenues would not be affected.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None. The bill would not directly affect small businesses.

Fiscal Analysis

State Expenditures: Under current law, persons sentenced to life imprisonment are eligible for parole after serving 15 years (25 years if the conviction was for first degree murder). However, before the Parole Commission (for the Division of Correction) or the Parole Review Board (for the Patuxent Institution) can grant parole, the Governor must approve it.

Under this bill, general fund expenditures could decrease due to inmates with life sentences serving less time in incarceration. Savings would be approximately \$225 per month per inmate released on parole, but the total amount cannot be reliably estimated.

There are currently 1,818 persons serving a life sentence with the Division of Correction. In 1987, that number was 1,057. The average age of a life sentence prisoner is 37.4 years. The following numbers of prisoners were recommended for parole by the Parole Commission in recent years:

	<u>Recommended for Parole</u>	<u>Gov. Approved</u>	<u>Gov. Denied</u>
1988	12	0	12
1989	8	1	7
1990	7	0	7
1991	20	11	9
1992	18	9	9
1993	10 7	3	
1994	13	7	6
1995	13	2	11
1996	NONE SUBMITTED		

Information Source(s): Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (Parole Commission, Division of Correction); Office of the Governor; Department of Fiscal Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 17, 1997

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