

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2000 Session

FISCAL NOTE

Senate Bill 11 (Senator Currie)

Judicial Proceedings

Regulated Firearms - Straw Purchases

This bill changes the current law criminal offense of participation in the straw purchase of a regulated firearm to a felony from a misdemeanor. The bill does not alter the current law maximum penalties for the offense: a fine of \$25,000 and/or imprisonment for ten years. Also under current law, each violation is required to be considered a separate offense.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Minimal. Due to the current law penalties for this offense, such cases are already heard in the circuit courts rather than the District Court. However, it might be noted that the change of a crime from misdemeanor to felony status could confer an additional seriousness (and penalty) to various other crimes committed as part of the same incident. The extent to which additional felony convictions may affect sentencing for other crimes cannot be reliably estimated. In any event, the number of people convicted of this crime is not expected to change. Unless there is a major change in sentencing patterns, expenditures relating to incarceration should not be materially affected.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Violators of Maryland's prohibition against participation in a straw purchase of regulated firearms are guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to maximum penalties of a fine of \$25,000 and/or imprisonment for ten years. Each violation must be considered a separate offense.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (Division of Correction), Department of Legislative Services

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bc/jr

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