

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2000 Session

FISCAL NOTE

Senate Bill 687 (Senator Hollinger, *et al.*)

Economic and Environmental Affairs and Budget and Taxation

School Health Programs - Smoking Prevention - A Nurse in Every School

This bill requires local boards of education to implement a comprehensive smoking prevention program as part of the school health program. The program must provide for a registered nurse in each public school, and local boards are eligible to receive a State grant to implement the program contingent upon providing a 50% local match and meeting program criteria. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), in consultation with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the Governor’s Office for Children, Youth, and Families, must adopt regulations that establish standards and criteria for awarding grants in an amount not greater than \$10 million. The State Board of Education must submit a report to the Governor and the General Assembly by June 1 of each year.

In addition, the bill adds the comprehensive smoking prevention program to the purposes for which expenditures from the Cigarette Restitution Fund may be made.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General and special fund expenditures could increase by \$10 million annually beginning in FY 2001. Revenues would not be affected.

(in millions)	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005
GF/SF Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF/SF Expenditures	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0
Net Effect	(\$10.0)	(\$10.0)	(\$10.0)	(\$10.0)	(\$10.0)

Note: () = decrease; GF = general funds; SF = special funds

Local Effect: Local government expenditures could increase by \$20.6 million in FY 2001. State aid for the comprehensive smoking prevention program could increase by \$10 million in FY 2001. **This bill imposes a mandate on a unit of local government.**

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Local boards of education are required to develop a school health program that provides adequate school health services, instruction in health education, and a healthful school environment. Local boards are not required to provide registered nurses in public schools.

Background: All 24 local school systems in Maryland provide a school health program to students. School health programs are managed by the local school system in 11 jurisdictions, by the local health department in ten jurisdictions, and by a combination of school and health department staff in three jurisdictions. The level of health services provided by local school systems varies by jurisdiction. The health services program in many school systems provides periodic health screenings, maintains student health records, provides wellness programs for students and staff, coordinates and provides health services in conjunction with the county health department, and assists classroom teachers with implementation of the health education curriculum. However, in many smaller school systems, the health program only incorporates the required vision screening, immunization requirements, and scoliosis testing.

State Fiscal Effect: This bill provides up to \$10 million in State grants to local school systems to implement the comprehensive smoking prevention program. In addition, the bill adds the comprehensive smoking prevention program to the purposes for which expenditures from the Cigarette Restitution Fund may be made.

The Cigarette Restitution Act of 1999 outlined nine legislative spending priorities for the Cigarette Restitution Fund addressing health- and tobacco-related issues. While the statute mandates that at least 50% of the spending should be focused on the nine priority areas, the Governor has considerable latitude in constructing a budget proposal for the use of the funds. The \$10 million in State grants for the implementation of the comprehensive smoking prevention program could be either funded with general funds or through the Cigarette Restitution Fund. The bill does not specifically require the Governor to fund the program out of the Cigarette Restitution Fund.

Local Fiscal Effect: There are 1,355 public schools in Maryland. Local school systems employ 784 registered nurses, 157 licensed practical nurses, 700 health aides, and 25 nurse practitioners. Only four local school systems (Allegany, Baltimore, Harford, and Worcester counties) provide a registered nurse in each public school. Eleven local school systems have

a registered nurse or licensed practical nurse in every public school. School health personnel are funded primarily by the local school system in 13 jurisdictions, by the local health department in seven jurisdictions, and by both the local health department and local school system in four jurisdictions.

Local school systems would have to hire an additional 545 registered nurses in order to comply with the staffing requirement under the comprehensive smoking prevention program. Based on an estimated beginning salary of \$30,250, local school expenditures could increase by \$20.6 million in fiscal 2001 (\$16.5 million for salaries and \$4.1 million for fringe benefits).

Local school systems are eligible to receive up to \$10 million in State grants to implement the comprehensive smoking prevention program. To be eligible for funding, local school systems must provide a nurse in every school or enhance existing school health services and provide a 50% local match. MSDE is required to adopt regulations establishing standards and criteria for the matching grant.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education, Department of Legislative Services

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