

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2005 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 629 (Delegate Burns)
Health and Government Operations

Baltimore County - New Group Homes

This bill provides that no new group homes may be constructed, licensed, or operated by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH), the Department of Human Resources (DHR), the Office for Children, Youth, and Families (OCYF), or the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) in the Randallstown, Pikesville, Owings Mills, Catonsville, Villanova, Woodlawn, or Holbrook areas on or after October 1, 2005.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: To the extent these State agencies cannot locate group homes close to necessities such as public transportation, expenditures could increase. Any increase is expected to be minimal. OCYF does not construct, license, or operate group homes.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: Potential meaningful. Small business group home operators could incur additional costs because they cannot locate the homes close to necessities such as public transportation.

Analysis

Current Law: Residential group homes are licensed by DJS, DHR, and DHMH. A group home may not be required to obtain a license from more than one State agency.

The federal Fair Housing Act prohibits a state, political subdivision, or other such jurisdiction from making zoning or land use decisions that discriminate against persons with disabilities.

Background: According to OCYF, there are approximately 350 out-of-home youth placement licenses issued by the State. Approximately 300 are issued for placements by DHR, 19 by DJS, and 20 by DHMH.

A September 2000 Executive Order established the Task Force to Study the Licensing and Monitoring of Community-based Homes for Children. The task force met from February to September 2001 and held two public hearings for citizens to voice their concerns about group homes. One of the issues addressed by citizens was the adverse impact that group homes have on local schools and community resources. The task force suggested in its final report that further study be conducted to assess the effect that group home placements have on local schools.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: An identical bill, HB 1051 of 2004, was not reported by the Health and Government Operations Committee.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Juvenile Services, Department of Human Resources, Governor's Office (Office for Children, Youth, and Families, Baltimore County, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (Office of Health Care Quality, Developmental Disabilities Administration), Department of Legislative Services

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