

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2008 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1146 (Delegate Manno, *et al.*)
Health and Government Operations

Limited Service Pregnancy Centers - Disclaimers

This bill defines “limited service pregnancy centers” as centers that • provide pregnancy-related services as their primary purpose; • provide information about pregnancy-related services, regardless of whether or not a fee is charged; and • do not provide or refer for abortions *or* nondirective and comprehensive contraceptive services. The bill requires such centers to provide specific disclaimers to clients or potential clients.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill would not directly affect governmental finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: Disclaimers required of limited service pregnancy centers have to be given by the staff assisting the client or potential client during the first communication or contact with the client or potential client and must be in a written statement or by oral communication that is reasonably understandable. The disclaimer has to state • that the information provided by the center is not intended to be medical advice or to establish a doctor-patient relationship; • that the client or potential client should consult with a health care provider prior to proceeding on any course of action regarding the pregnancy; and • the center is not required to provide factually accurate information to clients.

Current Law: Maryland law does not specifically address limited service pregnancy centers.

Background: The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's Maryland Family Planning program provides reproductive health services at more than 83 clinics operated by local health departments and other public and private nonprofit agencies. Nondirective counseling available at the clinics includes contraceptive services. An estimated 147,000 family planning/reproductive health visits occurred in 2008.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 690 (Senator Madaleno, *et al.*) – Finance.

Information Source(s): Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Office of the Attorney General (Consumer Protection Division), Department of Legislative Services

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