

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2010 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

Senate Bill 834

(Senators Currie and Miller)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Ways and Means

**Base Realignment and Closure - Public Charter Schools Located on a Federal
Military Base**

This bill allows the State Board of Education to grant a waiver from the requirement that a public charter school be open to all students on a space-available basis to a charter school that is located on a federal military base. However, the public charter school must admit students with parents who are not assigned to the base to at least 35% of its total available space and must admit all students on a lottery basis.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2010.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill is directed at local school systems.

Local Effect: Local school system expenditures may increase minimally to establish procedures to confirm that a student has a parent assigned to a particular military base.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Public charter schools in the State are open to all students on a space-available basis and must admit students on a lottery basis if more students apply than can be accommodated.

In general, a public charter school must comply with all the provisions of law and regulation governing other public schools.

A local board must disburse to a public charter school an amount of county, State, and federal money for elementary, middle, and high school students that is commensurate with the amount disbursed to other public schools in the local jurisdiction.

The primary public chartering authority for charter schools is the local board of education; the State Board of Education is a secondary public chartering authority when acting in its appeal review capacity or as the public chartering authority for a restructured school.

Background: The major federal military bases in the State are Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Andrews Air Force Base, Fort Detrick, Fort Meade, Fort Richie, Patuxent River Naval Air Station, U.S. Coast Guard Activities Baltimore, U.S. Coast Guard Yard, and the U.S. Naval Academy. There are other smaller federal military bases and installations throughout the State.

In order to address an excess capacity of military facilities, the U.S. Congress created a process in 1990 known as Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC). The most recent round of plans regarding military installations nationwide became effective in November 2005.

The 2005 BRAC plans impact many of the federal military installations in the State, resulting in about 20,000 direct new jobs and placing Maryland among the largest beneficiaries nationally. These changes at each of the State's installations are expected to be phased in over a five- to six-year period. The bulk of the gains are expected at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Andrews Air Force Base, Fort Meade, and the National Naval Medical Center. Most of these jobs are projected to be medical professionals, engineers, and managers. In addition, many more indirect jobs will be created through contractors and related services. It is estimated that Maryland will gain approximately 28,000 households by the time the BRAC process is complete.

Some military bases, both overseas and in the United States, have schools run by the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) that are specifically for military dependents. There are no such schools in Maryland. In 2003, federal legislation known as the Stable Transitions in Education for Armed Services Dependent Youth Act was introduced for a five-year demonstration program that would establish a network of charter schools for military dependents. There is at least one charter school in Louisiana for military and DoD dependents, but it is not clear if military and DoD dependents are given preference to attend.

There are approximately 42 charter schools in the State: 33 in Baltimore City; 4 in Prince George's County; 2 in Anne Arundel County; and 1 each in Baltimore, Frederick, and St. Mary's counties.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education, U.S. Department of Defense, Belle Chasse Academy, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 23, 2010
ncs/mwc Revised - Senate Third Reader - March 30, 2010
Revised - Enrolled Bill - April 29, 2010

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