

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2010 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 897 (Delegate McComas, *et al.*)
Health and Government Operations

Health - Task Force on Alzheimer's Disease

This bill establishes a task force to survey current Alzheimer's disease research, survey practices being used and approaches being taken in the State regarding the disease, and make recommendations concerning the steps the State should take in dealing with Alzheimer's disease. The task force is required to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly by September 30, 2012. The Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene must designate the chair of the task force, and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) is required to staff the task force. A member of the task force is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under State travel regulations.

The bill terminates September 30, 2012.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Given the State's fiscal difficulties, agency budgets have been constrained. Thus, the requirement to staff the task force, survey research and current practices, and then report recommendations is not absorbable within the existing budgeted resources of DHMH. Instead, general fund expenditures increase minimally in FY 2011, 2012, and 2013 for contractual staff to conduct research and submit the required report. Revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: A number of programs, task forces, and councils address specific diseases and conditions. Some examples include the Asthma Control Program, the Kidney Disease Program, and the State Advisory Council on Hereditary and Congenital Disorders.

Background: Alzheimer's disease is a progressive and fatal brain disease for which there is no known cure. An estimated 5.3 million Americans are living with Alzheimer's nationwide, which destroys brain cells and causes memory problems. It is the seventh leading cause of death in the United States.

Age is the most important known risk factor in individuals with Alzheimer's disease as it affects 13% of Americans who are age 65. In addition, the number of individuals with Alzheimer's doubles every five years beyond age 65. As baby boomers age, it is estimated the incidence of Alzheimer's will reach 7.7 million by 2030, creating a significant impact on the American health care system. Alzheimer's and dementia are responsible for tripling health care costs for Americans age 65 and older.

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, at least 18 states have established task forces to identify problems and develop a plan for dealing with Alzheimer's disease.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: HB 1107 of 2009 received a hearing in the House Health and Government Operations Committee, but no further action was taken on the bill.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Alzheimer's Association, National Conference of State Legislatures, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Department of Legislative Services

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