

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2011 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 227 (Senators Dyson and Middleton)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Health and Government Operations

Charlotte Hall Veterans Home - Gifts and Grants - Authority to Accept and Spend

This bill specifies that the Charlotte Hall Veterans Home may accept a gift or grant and may spend the principal and income of the donation for use at the home.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill does not directly affect governmental operations or finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The bill establishes how gifts or grants received by the home must be administered and specifies how the State's finance and procurement laws pertain to such gifts. In particular, the bill clarifies that gifts and grants received by the home are not subject to a reversion provision that requires balances of unspent State appropriations to be reverted to the general fund at the end of each fiscal year.

Annually by August 31, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs must report to the General Assembly regarding the status of gifts and grants received by the home. The report must include (1) the amount of the donations received; (2) the costs of administering the gifts and grants; and (3) a detailed accounting of how these donations were used.

Current Law/Background: Chapter 742 of 2009 established the Maryland Veterans Trust Fund, which is a special, nonlapsing fund within the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA). Money in the fund may be used to make grants and loans to veterans and their families, support public and private programs that serve veterans in the State, or support the Charlotte Hall Veterans Home. Money in the fund may also be used to invest in general obligations of the State or other securities, pay for the cost of administering the fund, or support any other programs that the Secretary considers appropriate. Money expended from the fund is supplemental to and is not intended to take the place of funding otherwise appropriated to MDVA.

MDVA advises that some members of the veterans' community have expressed concerns about how MDVA uses their donations since the establishment of the Maryland Veterans Trust Fund. Prior to Chapter 742 gifts or grants donated to MDVA could only be used for expenses related to the Charlotte Hall Veterans Home. Chapter 742 expanded the uses of the monies so that resources may be used for other veteran-related purposes. According to MDVA, some potential donors prefer giving directly to the home. The bill offers potential donors the option of donating to the home or to the trust fund established by Chapter 742.

The Veterans Home Program is charged with exercising general supervision over and adopting rules for the government and management of the Charlotte Hall Veterans Home. The home is an assisted living long-term care facility for Maryland veterans and eligible spouses who require disability care. The home provides shelter, sustenance, medical care, and social services. In fiscal 2010, the home had a resident population of 394.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: HB 332 (Delegate Wood, *et al.*) - Health and Government Operations.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Legislative Services

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ncs/ljm

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