

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2014 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1174

(Delegate Dumais)

Environmental Matters

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Recreational Hunting or Fishing Licenses - Denial, Suspension, and Required Disclosure

This bill establishes that provisions governing the denial or suspension of licenses for failure to pay child support apply to recreational hunting and fishing licenses. The bill also requires the Department of Human Resources (DHR) to, by July 1, 2014, request an exemption from the federal government that would allow the State to collect only the last four digits of a recreational hunting or fishing license applicant's Social Security number, instead of the whole Social Security number, on the license application. If correspondence granting an exemption is received by July 1, 2015, the bill (1) requires only the last four digits of a recreational hunting or fishing license applicant's Social Security number to be included on the application; (2) repeals a requirement that an applicant's occupation be included on a hunting license application; and (3) allows for just the last four digits of an person's Social Security number to be exchanged between the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and DHR for purposes of identifying persons in arrears on child support obligations for potential license denial or suspension.

The bill takes effect June 1, 2014, and the contingent provisions take effect when the Department of Legislative Services receives notice of the specified correspondence from DHR.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill is not expected to materially affect State finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background:

Federal Requirements

The federal Social Security Act, under which federal funding is provided to states for child support program operations, includes various requirements that states must comply with, including having laws in effect that:

- require the Social Security number of any applicant for a professional license, driver's license, occupational license, recreational license, or marriage license to be recorded on the application; and
- provide the State authority to withhold or suspend, or to restrict the use of, driver's licenses, professional and occupational licenses, and recreational and sporting licenses of individuals owing overdue support or failing, after receiving appropriate notice, to comply with subpoenas or warrants relating to paternity or child support proceedings.

However, if a State demonstrates that the enactment of an alternative to a law required to be in effect will not decrease the effectiveness and efficiency of the State child support enforcement program, an exemption from the requirement may be granted by the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

State Law/Procedures

In accordance with the Family Law Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, licensing authorities, which include DNR among others, must require each occupational license applicant to disclose his/her Social Security number and record that number on the application. The Child Support Enforcement Administration (CSEA), a division of DHR, may ask licensing authorities for information concerning any obligor in arrears in paying child support. A request by CSEA for this information must contain the full name and Social Security number of the obligor and may be transmitted to a licensing authority using an electronic format. In addition, upon request, a licensing authority must also submit the obligor's address and a description of the license held by the obligor. CSEA is authorized to request that a licensing authority suspend or deny a person's license, in specified circumstances. These provisions, however, do not apply to recreational licenses.

Pursuant to provisions of the Natural Resources Article, DNR collects Social Security numbers of recreational hunting and fishing licensees, but because the provisions under the Family Law Article relating to suspension or denial of licenses for child support

arrearsages currently apply only to occupational licenses, DNR does not exchange information with CSEA on recreational licensees.

DNR's COMPASS online licensing and registration system was designed so that an individual can access or create a personal DNR licensing account via the Internet, telephone, or U.S. mail or by visiting a DNR service center. Individuals may also establish a personal DNR licensing account at 1 of DNR's approximately 250 sports license agent locations in retail stores throughout the State. Once an individual creates an account, he/she is issued a DNR identification card that contains a unique identification number (not a Social Security number) to use for future licensing purchases. A person's Social Security number is required only to establish a DNR licensing account and it is not requested subsequently to process licensing transactions.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Natural Resources, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 3, 2014
mc/lgc

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