

Department of Legislative Services  
 Maryland General Assembly  
 2016 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
 Enrolled - Revised

House Bill 115  
 Ways and Means

(Delegate Reznik, *et al.*)  
 Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Education - Robotics Grant Program - Establishment

This bill establishes a Robotics Grant Program to provide grants to public schools and nonprofit robotics clubs to support existing robotics programs in the State and increase the number of robotics programs in the State. A school is eligible to receive a grant through the program if the school is proposing a new robotics program or club or has an existing robotics program or club. An existing nonprofit robotics club is eligible to receive a grant if it is associated with a public school. The Governor must appropriate at least \$250,000 in the annual State budget for the program. The Maryland State Department of Education must implement and administer the program, and may adopt regulations to implement provisions of the bill.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2016.

Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** General fund expenditures increase by \$250,000 annually beginning in FY 2017. However, the FY 2017 State budget does not include funding for the program. Revenues are not affected. **This bill establishes a mandated appropriation beginning in FY 2018.**

(in dollars)	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000
Net Effect	(\$250,000)	(\$250,000)	(\$250,000)	(\$250,000)	(\$250,000)

Note:() = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate effect

**Local Effect:** Statewide, at least \$250,000 annually is distributed to eligible local public schools beginning as early as FY 2017.

**Small Business Effect:** Small businesses that supply robotics-related software, hardware, and services may benefit to the extent that local school systems and nonprofit robotics clubs use grant funds to purchase such goods and services.

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## Analysis

**Current Law:** There is no State robotics grant program supporting robotics programs in public schools.

**Background:** Baltimore City is among local school systems with several robotics programs. Baltimore City advises that if the local school system receives grant funding, this would support the replenishing of e-materials for 72 programs, as well as registration and travel to robotics competitions. Talbot County Public Schools has robotics clubs in half of its schools and offers robotics courses at the middle and high schools.

The fiscal 2017 State budget does not include funding for a robotics grant program. The Science and Mathematics Education Initiative is intended to strengthen science and mathematics programs through activities such as summer sessions for teachers and an equipment incentive fund. While this program has been funded at \$2.0 million or above since fiscal 2012, the State budget includes no funding for the program in fiscal 2017.

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## Additional Information

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** SB 582 (Senator King) - Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs.

**Information Source(s):** Baltimore City, Harford and Talbot counties, Maryland State Department of Education, Department of Budget and Management, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 3, 2016  
min/rhh Revised - House Third Reader/Updated Information/Updated  
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