

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2016 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
First Reader

Senate Bill 689  
Finance

(Senator Muse, *et al.*)

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Task Force on Workplace Bullying in State Agencies

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This bill establishes a Task Force on Workplace Bullying in State Agencies, staffed by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM). The task force must study the effects of workplace bullying in State agencies and develop a survey to collect data on the prevalence of workplace bullying in State agencies and statistics on the characteristics of employees who are bullied. The bill specifies the membership of the task force and requires it to report findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 31, 2016.

The bill takes effect June 1, 2016, and terminates June 30, 2017.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** DBM can provide staff support to the task force and develop the survey with existing budgeted resources. Any expense reimbursements for members of the task force are presumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing budgeted resources. No effect on revenues.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Analysis

**Current Law/Background:** Employment discrimination and harassment by State managers, supervisors, or other employees is prohibited.

State employees may file a grievance over any dispute they have with their employer about the interpretation of and application to the employee of (1) a personnel policy or regulation adopted by the Secretary of Budget and Management or (2) any other policy or regulation over which management has control. Grievances are not allowed for disputes between employees.

The Employee and Labor Relations Division within DBM administers the Employee Assistance Program, which provides confidential and professional referral and assessment services to State employees experiencing personal difficulties that are affecting job performance. It also provides mediation services to assist in resolving workplace disputes.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** A similar bill, HB 700 of 2014, received a hearing in the House Appropriations Committee, but no further action was taken. Its cross file, SB 252, passed the Senate with substantial amendments and was referred to the House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee, but no further action was taken.

**Cross File:** HB 1104 (Delegate P. Young, *et al.*) - Appropriations.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Budget and Management, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 29, 2016  
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