

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2018 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 813
Judiciary

(Delegate Mosby, *et al.*)

Public Safety - Community Program Fund - Firearm Laws

This bill (1) alters the stated purpose of the Community Program Fund to include a study of the enforcement and effects of State firearms laws and (2) requires that, in both fiscal 2019 and 2020, \$100,000 from the fund must be used to provide grants for a comprehensive study of the enforcement and effects of State firearms laws. The Executive Director of the Governor’s Office of Crime Control and Prevention (GOCCP) must establish a process for the award of grant funds under the bill. The funds must be awarded by July 31 in each of the two fiscal years to a single entity that has extensive experience studying firearm laws and firearm law enforcement. The study must include specified information and must be submitted to the General Assembly by December 31, 2019. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2018, and terminates June 30, 2020.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: GOCCP can implement the bill’s changes with existing resources. While the bill expands the authorized uses of the Community Program Fund, it does not affect the overall finances of the fund. Thus, State finances are not affected, assuming that a State agency is not the single entity that is awarded funding to conduct the required study.

Local Effect: Although the bill does not change the overall amount of funding available for grant awards, unless the single entity that conducts the required study is a unit of local government, the bill results in a decrease in the total amount of grants awarded to local governments by \$100,000 annually in both FY 2019 and 2020. Thus, the bill may result in a decrease in local grant revenues and corresponding expenditures for some jurisdictions.

Small Business Effect: Minimal or none.

Analysis

Bill Summary: A study for which grant funds are awarded under the bill must provide a compilation of the data required at the county level and statewide and must consider and include, at a minimum, the following information for the most recent 10-year period:

- for cases involving murder or attempted murder: trace information regarding the origin of purchase of the regulated firearm; the chain of ownership of the regulated firearm; and the location of the murder or attempted murder;
- the frequency, disposition, and sentencing outcome of cases in which an individual convicted of a disqualifying crime is charged with the violation of a firearm law;
- the outcome of any inspections of dealers, including any dealer violations and the response to the violations; and
- any other information that the entity that receives the grant award considers necessary.

Current Law/Background: Chapter 519 of 2016 established a Community Program Fund as a special, nonlapsing fund administered by the Executive Director of GOCCP. The stated purpose of the fund is to assist local law enforcement agencies in establishing community programs and agencies of a local government in establishing violence intervention programs. The fund consists of (1) money appropriated in the State budget to the fund; (2) investment earnings of the fund; and (3) money from any other source accepted for the benefit of the fund. For fiscal 2018 and each fiscal year thereafter, the Governor is required to include in the annual budget bill an appropriation to the fund of \$500,000. The Governor's proposed fiscal 2019 budget includes \$500,000 for the fund. The fund may be used only to fund grants, as specified, and may not be used for administrative expenses.

“Community program” means a violence intervention program established and supported by a local law enforcement agency or another agency of a local government or a program that is established and sponsored by a local law enforcement agency to (1) provide recreational or athletic opportunities for members of the community; (2) improve relations between citizens and law enforcement; or (3) otherwise benefit or improve the community.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Charles, and Montgomery counties; cities of Bowie and Takoma Park; Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention; University System of Maryland; Department of State Police; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 4, 2018
md/lgc

Analysis by: Shirleen M. E. Pilgrim

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510