

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
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FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 844

(Senator Carter, *et al.*)

Judicial Proceedings

**Public Safety - Baltimore City Anti-Violence Program Grant Fund -
Establishment**

This bill establishes the Baltimore City Anti-Violence Program Grant Fund as a special, nonlapsing fund to provide grants to “anti-violence programs” to implement crime prevention and crime intervention strategies in Baltimore City. Fusion Partnerships, Inc. (Fusion) must administer the fund, which consists of money appropriated in the State budget to the fund, investment earnings of the fund, and any other money accepted from any other source for the benefit of the fund. Expenditures from the fund may be made only in accordance with the State budget. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2019.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures increase significantly (likely in the millions of dollars annually) beginning in FY 2020 to capitalize the fund. Special fund revenues to and expenditures from the fund increase correspondingly.

Local Effect: Baltimore City grant revenues may increase significantly to the extent city-sponsored projects receive grants under the bill; grant expenditures increase correspondingly.

Small Business Effect: Potential meaningful.

Analysis

Bill Summary/Current Law: The State Treasurer must hold the fund separately and the Comptroller, in conjunction with Fusion, must account for the fund. The State Treasurer must invest the money of the fund in the same manner as other State money may be

invested. Interest earnings are credited to the fund. The accounts and transactions of the fund are subject to audit by the Legislative Auditor.

“Anti-violence program” means a community-based, anti-violence crime prevention or intervention program operating in Baltimore City. The following programs and entities are included:

- The Safe Streets Program in the Baltimore City Health Department;
- The Kujichagulia Center of Sinai Hospital of Baltimore;
- Men and Families Center, Inc.;
- Out for Justice, Inc.;
- The Youth Empowered Society;
- The Pre-adjudication Coordination and Training Evening Reporting Center in the Baltimore City Mayor’s Office of Employment and Development;
- The Baltimore Community Mediation Center;
- The Junior State’s Attorney Program in the Office of the State’s Attorney;
- The Resiliency in Communities After Stress and Trauma Program of Baltimore City; and
- The Baltimore City Intergenerational Initiatives for Trauma and Youth.

Current Law/Background: Fusion is an organization that works to bring people together across diverse perspectives and social divides to build unity and collaboration for social change. It facilitates educational and community workshops and events to help to develop individual and organizational capacity in addressing racial disparities and other social justice issues. Since 2003, Fusion has offered fiscal sponsorship and capacity building support to grassroots community leaders working for social justice in Baltimore. The organization provides technical and administrative support, including financial management, human resources, grant management, and contract services.

The Safe Streets Program in the Baltimore City Health Department emphasizes the delivery of a unified message that violence is no longer acceptable through community organization and public education. In addition, Safe Streets incorporates and emphasizes a street outreach component, with outreach workers canvassing neighborhoods and connecting with high-risk youth and young adults during evenings and weekends to diffuse situations and link such individuals to services.

The Kujichagulia Center of Sinai Hospital of Baltimore (self-determination in Swahili) provides youth development and violence prevention services. In addition, the center provides mentoring for middle school students, a summer jobs program, violence intervention services, and case management services to help youth engage in educational or vocational programming.

The Men and Families Center, Inc. is a nonprofit, holistic family services agency. The mission of the center is to create safer, more resilient men, women, children, and families by supporting them in developing their inner strengths, life skills, parenting skills, and networks of resources through holistic approaches that move them toward self-sufficiency and self-empowerment.

Out For Justice is an ex-offender, member-led organization that promotes the reform of policies that adversely affect an ex-offender re-entering into society successfully. The program encourages ex-offenders to use the legislative process to lead the change they want to see.

The Youth Empowered Society is a drop-in center for homeless youth. The program serves as a safe space for youth who are homeless and between the ages of 14 and 25 to get basic needs met and establish supportive relationships to make and sustain connections to long-term resources and opportunities.

The Pre-adjudication Coordination and Training Evening Reporting Center serves young men, between the ages of 14 and 17, who would otherwise be in secure detention while awaiting their court dates. The center provides youth development activities, creative learning projects, field trips, and access to a workout center with a qualified fitness instructor. Participants are referred by the Department of Juvenile Services.

The Baltimore Community Mediation Center provides free mediation services and teaches conflict resolution skills in neighborhoods, families, schools, and businesses in Baltimore City.

The Junior State's Attorney Program in the Office of the State's Attorney is a six-week summer intensive program for ninth-grade Baltimore City students. The program aims to build trust and faith in the criminal justice profession by exposing students to careers in the fields of criminal justice and government. Students are selected based on a written essay, application, and interview.

The Resiliency in Communities After Stress and Trauma Program of Baltimore City seeks to reduce the impact of trauma and build resilience in Central West Baltimore communities adversely impacted by the unrest in Baltimore City following the death of Freddie Gray in April 2015. The program empowers community organizations from West Baltimore to implement high-quality, trauma-informed services to promote connectedness and resilience in youth.

The Baltimore City Intergenerational Initiatives for Trauma and Youth (B-CIITY) is a community-led, collaborative effort between West Baltimore stakeholders to develop and share effective behavioral and mental health strategies and resources in partnership with youth and families to promote resilience and healing. B-CIITY is led by a community board and supported by a number of city agencies and community partners.

State Fiscal Effect: Although the bill does not require a specific amount of funding to be appropriated to the fund in any given year, the Department of Legislative Services advises that, given the broad range of programs and activities identified in the bill, a significant amount of funding is required to capitalize the grant program. Thus, general fund expenditures increase significantly beginning in fiscal 2020 in order to capitalize the new fund. A viable program likely requires a general fund appropriation of several million dollars annually. Special fund revenues to and expenditures from the fund increase correspondingly.

Fusion is a private nonprofit organization. While it is assumed that additional staff are necessary to administer the fund, the bill does not authorize the use of the new special fund to cover any administrative costs. Thus, it is assumed that Fusion absorbs any administrative costs and that any such costs are not borne by the State.

The Office of Legislative Audits can implement the bill with existing budgeted resources.

Local Expenditures: Several of the programs identified in the bill are sponsored by Baltimore City entities; therefore, Baltimore City grant revenues may increase significantly to the extent city-sponsored projects receive grants under the bill to implement crime prevention and crime intervention strategies. Baltimore City grant expenditures increase correspondingly.

Small Business Effect: Small businesses that are able to secure funding for anti-violence programs to implement crime prevention and crime intervention strategies may be able to expand as a result of the bill.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Comptroller's Office; Maryland State's Attorneys' Association; Department of Legislative Services

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sb/lgc

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