

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2020 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 1045 (Senator Eckardt)
 Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

**Department of Information Technology - Study of a Common Information
 Technology Platform for Health Occupations Boards**

This bill requires the Department of Information Technology (DoIT), in consultation with the health occupations boards, to (1) review the information technology (IT) platforms used by each board, including the administrative functions used by each board and the cost of operating the platforms and (2) make recommendations on the feasibility and cost of developing a common and standardized platform for use by each board, as specified. DoIT must submit its findings and recommendations to specified committees of the General Assembly by December 1, 2020. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2020.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures increase by \$250,000 in fiscal 2021 only. Revenues are not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	250,000	0	0	0	0
Net Effect	(\$250,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

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

Local Effect: The bill does not directly affect local governmental operations or finances.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: DoIT's recommendations must include the cost and feasibility of:

- adopting a standardized website appearance and functionality for all boards;
- offering each board the ability to send automated notices;
- the ability to translate the website of each board into other languages, as specified;
- offering a standardized method of presenting information to regulated health care providers and the public on licensing or certification, meeting scheduling and agendas, board membership and staff, public notices, and complaint processing; and
- if possible, using existing platforms employed by the boards, if consistent with the statewide IT master plan, in developing the common platform.

Current Law/Background:

Health Occupations Boards and Consolidation of IT

Twenty health occupations boards share responsibility for regulating various health professions in Maryland. The boards are responsible for the examination, licensure, certification, or registration; regulation; and discipline of more than 388,000 health care providers. Additionally, the boards set standards of practice and continuing education requirements. The boards charged with regulating the health care professionals are generally funded through various fees including license fees and registration fees. Most boards regulate 5,000 or fewer active licensees, registrants, and certificate holders; however, this number ranges from about 500 (for the Board of Podiatric Medical Examiners) to about 240,000 (for the Board of Nursing).

Recently, the Maryland Department of Health had supported a major IT project to improve the licensing and investigation processes of the health occupation boards. However, after both the Board of Physicians and the Board of Nursing backed away from spearheading the Electronic Licensing and Regulatory Management System, there is no funding in the Governor's proposed fiscal 2021 budget for this project. Moreover, the proposed budget includes about \$650,000 in fiscal 2021 to maintain the legacy licensing software for several of the boards.

Department of Information Technology and OneStop

DoIT and the Secretary of Information Technology are, among other things, responsible for (1) developing and enforcing IT policies, procedures, and standards; (2) providing technical assistance, advice, and recommendations to any unit of State government; and (3) developing and maintaining a statewide IT master plan. Certain agencies, such as the

Maryland Stadium Authority and University System of Maryland, are exempt from DoIT's direct oversight.

DoIT is currently working to consolidate all of the State's license and certification platforms into a single platform known as the OneStop portal. The ultimate goal of the project is to retire outdated State paper-based applications and legacy databases used by many agencies for licensing, as these systems can be expensive to maintain and present significant cybersecurity risks. As the project proceeds, DoIT plans to collaborate with State agencies, a few at a time, to convert their systems to OneStop. The current schedule for the project includes the conversion of the Department of Natural Resources and the Maryland Department of Labor licensing systems. In total, the Governor's proposed budget for fiscal 2021 includes \$7.3 million for the project.

State Expenditures: DoIT is currently working with a contractor to develop and implement the OneStop portal discussed above. As the ultimate goal of OneStop is to consolidate all the State's licensing systems into a single platform, the contractor is the entity most appropriate to determine how best to consolidate the health occupations boards' websites and licensing systems. Therefore, general fund expenditures increase by \$250,000 in fiscal 2021 for DoIT to hire the contractor to conduct the evaluation and develop the recommendations required by the bill.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Designated Cross File: HB 1447 (Delegate Krebs, *et al.*) - Health and Government Operations.

Information Source(s): Department of Information Technology; Maryland Department of Health; Department of Legislative Services

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