

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2024 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
 Third Reader

Senate Bill 578

(Senator Guzzone, *et al.*)

Budget and Taxation

Health and Government Operations

Professional and Volunteer Firefighter Innovative Cancer Screening
 Technologies Program - Funding

This bill repeals the current \$100,000 annual mandated appropriation for the Professional and Volunteer Firefighter Innovative Cancer Screening Technologies Program. Instead, beginning in fiscal 2025, the bill *authorizes* the Governor to include at least \$500,000 in the annual budget for the program. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2024.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Assuming discretionary funding is provided in FY 2025 and subsequent years, general fund expenditures increase by \$400,000 beginning in FY 2025, as discussed below. The FY 2025 budget as introduced includes \$100,000 for the program under the existing mandated appropriation. Revenues are not affected. **This bill eliminates a mandated appropriation beginning in FY 2025.**

(in dollars)	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000
Net Effect	(\$400,000)	(\$400,000)	(\$400,000)	(\$400,000)	(\$400,000)

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

Local Effect: Local revenues and expenditures increase to the extent that (1) more funding is available for the program and (2) a local fire department applies for and receives a grant from the program.

Small Business Effect: Potential minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: Chapter 219 of 2019 established the program, administered by the Maryland Department of Health (MDH), to provide grants to local fire departments and volunteer fire companies and departments to procure innovative cancer screening tests that are not otherwise conducted during routine physical examinations or not covered by insurance. The goal of the program is to reduce cancer mortality among firefighters while advancing the adoption of novel technologies that may also benefit the health of Marylanders and the economy of the State.

Each year, MDH must issue a request for applications from local fire departments and volunteer fire companies or departments (the only entities eligible to apply for grants). The county where the department or company is located must assist the department or company with filing applications. Several criteria must be included in an application, including the number of firefighters proposed to be screened and a description of each test proposed. MDH must develop a weighting formula to rate each application and must prioritize applicants based on the quality of the application and the degree to which the proposed tests meet specified criteria. If MDH receives applications for grants totaling more than the amount of funds available for the program, MDH must award the grants on a *pro rata* basis.

The program's appropriations and expenditures (including funds received as grants) are subject to audit by the Office of Legislative Audits. By December 1 each year, MDH must submit a report to specified committees of the General Assembly concerning the program's activities.

State Expenditures: Although discretionary, the bill specifies an intended funding level of at least \$500,000 annually beginning in fiscal 2025, a \$400,000 increase over the \$100,000 mandated funding repealed under the bill. Thus, this analysis assumes that the full amount of discretionary funding is provided and MDH general fund expenditures increase by \$400,000 annually beginning in fiscal 2025 to issue grants. Otherwise, funding may increase to a lesser extent or even decrease in the absence of a mandated appropriation.

The fiscal 2025 budget as introduced includes \$100,000 in general funds for the program under the current mandated appropriation that is repealed under the bill.

Additional Comments: While MDH is required to annually report on the program's activities, including providing information on grants awarded, a report has yet to be submitted since the program was established. MDH advises that, to date, the program has not issued any grants; however, in January 2024, the program did receive applications for grants that are currently under review. The program anticipates issuing awards to successful applicants in fiscal 2024.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: HB 1472 (Delegate D. Jones, *et al.*) - Health and Government Operations.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 5, 2024
rh/jc Third Reader - March 13, 2024

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