

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
 Enrolled - Revised

House Bill 809
 Appropriations

(Delegate Rosenberg)

Budget and Taxation

Walter Sondheim Jr. Public Service Internship Scholarship Program - Funding

This bill specifies that the Walter Sondheim Jr. Public Service Internship Scholarship Program consists of at least three public service intern fellowships: (1) the Governor’s Summer Internship Program; (2) the Sondheim Maryland Nonprofit Leadership Internship Program; and (3) the Sondheim Public Service Law Fellows Program. The bill also increases the maximum scholarship award amount from \$5,000 to \$6,000. Beginning fiscal 2028, the bill requires the Governor to include an appropriation for the program that is at least 125% of the appropriation provided for these programs in fiscal 2026. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: *Under one set of assumptions,* the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC) expenditures for the Walter Sondheim Jr. Public Service Internship Scholarship Program increase by approximately \$87,500 beginning FY 2028. This analysis assumes the additional program expenditures are supported in the State budget through additional general fund expenditures for UMBC, as discussed below. Increasing the maximum scholarship amount has no net effect on spending, though fewer awards may be made as a result. **This bill establishes a mandated appropriation beginning in FY 2028.**

(in dollars)	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	0	87,500	87,500	87,500	87,500
Net Effect	\$0	(\$87,500)	(\$87,500)	(\$87,500)	(\$87,500)

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

Local Effect: No direct fiscal effect; however, the bill may encourage additional individuals to serve in internships with local governments.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Chapter 490 of 2007 established the Walter Sondheim Jr. Public Service Summer Internship Scholarship Program to assist college and graduate students with exploring public service career opportunities through summer internships. Chapter 397 of 2015 expanded the Sondheim scholarship from a summer program to include fall and spring internships and renamed it accordingly. Priority for participation in the program must be given to eligible students who (1) are residents of the State; (2) have demonstrated interest in careers in public service; and (3) assist in providing legal services to low-income State residents, social work services to low-income State residents, nursing services in nursing shortage areas, or other services in the public or nonprofit sectors in which there is a shortage of qualified practitioners for low-income or underserved residents or areas of the State.

The Shriver Center at UMBC administers the program and serves as a clearinghouse for public and nonprofit entities that wish to hire interns from the program. The program is supported with State general fund appropriations to UMBC. Award amounts, as updated under Chapter 536 of 2019, must be a minimum of \$2,000 and no more than \$5,000, subject to the availability of funds.

State Expenditures: UMBC advises that the Walter Sondheim Jr. Public Service Internship Scholarship Program received a total appropriation of \$350,000 in fiscal 2026. Although this funding is embedded within UMBC's overall State support and is not reflected as a separate line item in the State's operating budget, this analysis assumes that amount represents the fiscal 2026 appropriation for purposes of the bill's mandate. Beginning in fiscal 2028, the bill requires that the Governor include in the annual budget bill an appropriation for the Program of at least 125% of the fiscal 2026 appropriation. Accordingly, *under one set of assumptions*, the required minimum appropriation beginning is \$437,500, representing a minimum increase of \$87,500.

Since the program does not receive a discrete line item appropriation, the amount considered to be the fiscal 2026 appropriation for purposes of the mandate may depend on how the State characterizes the embedded funding within UMBC's broader appropriation. Thus, the actual funding required beginning in fiscal 2028 could vary to the extent a different fiscal 2026 baseline is identified.

For context, actual fiscal 2026 *expenditures* for the program totaled approximately \$326,600, including both administrative costs and funding awarded for the three specified fellowship programs, although UMBC reported the *appropriation* was \$350,000. That

amount excludes approximately \$99,300 associated with the Maryland Department of Transportation Fellows Program, which is administered separately. For the purposes of this estimate, it is assumed that the bill's mandate is tied to \$350,000 UMBC reports was appropriated for the program rather than actual expenditures and does not include any funding for the related Maryland Department of Transportation Fellows Program.

Furthermore, this analysis assumes that any increase required to meet the 125% funding mandate is achieved through additional general fund support provided to UMBC, rather than through the reallocation of existing funds within UMBC's overall State appropriation. To the extent the mandate is satisfied through the reallocation of existing funds within UMBC's overall State appropriation, rather than through additional general fund support, the net State fiscal impact may be reduced.

Increasing the maximum scholarship amount has no effect on total program spending. However, to the extent the Shriver Center chooses to issue larger scholarship awards, program funding will be sufficient for fewer total awards.

Additional Information

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

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Budget and Management; Maryland Department of Transportation; Maryland Higher Education Commission; University System of Maryland; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 22, 2026
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