

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2024 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
 First Reader

House Bill 912
 Judiciary

(Delegate Young)

Public Safety - Safe Neighborhoods Pilot Program

This bill requires the Governor’s Office of Crime Prevention and Policy (GOCPP) to establish a Safe Neighborhoods Pilot Program to, among other things, purchase doorbell cameras or security systems with doorbell cameras and install them in the homes of residents of high-crime areas who apply to participate in the program. GOCPP must coordinate with local law enforcement agencies and adopt implementing regulations, as specified. By December 31, 2026, GOCPP must report to the General Assembly specified information relating to the program and publicly post the report on its website. Beginning in fiscal 2026, the Governor must include in the annual budget bill an appropriation of \$5.0 million for the program to be used to (1) carry out the purposes of the program and (2) cover expenses incurred by GOCPP that are attributable to the program. **The bill terminates September 30, 2027.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures increase by \$111,700 in FY 2025 (for contractual staff) and by \$5.0 million annually from FY 2026 through 2028 (which reflects the bill’s mandated appropriation). Revenues are not affected. **This bill establishes a mandated appropriation from FY 2026 through 2028.**

(in dollars)	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	111,700	5,000,000	5,000,000	5,000,000	0
Net Effect	(\$111,700)	(\$5,000,000)	(\$5,000,000)	(\$5,000,000)	\$0

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

Local Effect: Local government finances are not anticipated to be materially affected. It is assumed that local law enforcement agencies can implement the bill using existing resources.

Small Business Effect: Potential meaningful.

Analysis

Bill Summary: GOCPP must establish the Safe Neighborhoods pilot program to (1) purchase doorbell cameras or security systems with doorbell cameras and install the cameras or systems in the homes of residents who apply to participate in the program; (2) engage community organizations and residents to promote community participation in the program; (3) provide training for residents on the use of a doorbell camera or security system with a doorbell camera, including how to access video produced by the camera; (4) establish a process for residents to contact law enforcement in order to submit video obtained by a doorbell camera as evidence; and (5) provide information to residents on the process for the submission of video captured by a doorbell camera to law enforcement.

GOCPP, in coordination with local law enforcement agencies, must (1) identify high-crime areas within local communities in the State; (2) establish a process for residents of high-crime areas identified by the office to apply to participate in the program; and (3) facilitate training for residents on the use of doorbell cameras and security systems with doorbell cameras.

By December 31, 2026, GOCPP must report to the General Assembly on:

- the crime rate within the identified high-crime areas following the implementation of the program;
- the total number of crimes solved with the aid of evidence obtained by cameras provided through the program;
- the sense of security among resident participants of the program;
- the total number of participants in the program; and
- the usefulness and viability of the program based on a cost-benefit analysis.

GOCPP must adopt regulations to implement the program, including regulations that:

- ensure that a doorbell camera or security system with a doorbell camera that is provided to a resident of a high-crime area includes two years of service at no cost to the resident;
- prohibit a law enforcement agency from compelling a resident to share footage obtained by a doorbell camera or security system with a doorbell camera provided through the program; and
- include measures that protect the privacy of residents and ensure that any data collected is securely stored and protected from unauthorized access or breaches.

Current Law: The Governor is required to include in the annual budget bill an appropriation of \$3.6 million for Baltimore City to be used only to (1) provide grants to

community-based organizations to operate Safe Streets Initiatives in Baltimore City and (2) cover expenses incurred by Baltimore City that are attributable to the Safe Streets Initiative, including personnel hired by Baltimore City and assigned to a Safe Streets Initiative. The funds must be used solely to supplement, and not supplant, funds otherwise available for Safe Streets Initiatives in Baltimore City.

A grant made with the appropriated funds may not (1) require a matching fund; (2) exceed \$600,000 per Safe Streets Initiative; or (3) supplant grant funding otherwise available for Safe Streets Initiatives.

By December 31 each year, the Mayor of Baltimore City must report to specified committees of the General Assembly on (1) the effectiveness of Safe Streets Initiatives in Baltimore City; (2) the status of all Safe Streets Initiatives in Baltimore City, as specified; and (3) any other information considered necessary by the Mayor of Baltimore City.

The fiscal 2025 budget as introduced includes \$3.6 million for Baltimore City Safe Streets.

“Safe Streets Initiative” means a violence prevention or intervention program operated by a community-based organization in a neighborhood that is disproportionately affected by violent crime.

State Expenditures: General fund expenditures increase by \$111,653 in fiscal 2025 and by \$5.0 million annually from fiscal 2026 through 2028, as discussed below.

Mandated Funding – Fiscal 2026 through 2028

General fund expenditures increase by \$5.0 million annually from fiscal 2026 through 2028 due to the bill’s mandated appropriation – to carry out the purposes of the program and to cover expenses incurred by GOCPP that are attributable to the program (discussed below). The Department of Legislative Services notes that the bill terminates September 30, 2027, (at the end of the first quarter of fiscal 2028); it is assumed that despite the termination date, the mandated appropriation applies for fiscal 2028 as the fiscal 2028 budget will have been enacted by the time the bill terminates.

Administrative Expenditures Beginning in Fiscal 2025

General fund expenditures increase by \$111,653 in fiscal 2025, which reflects the bill’s October 1, 2024 effective date. This estimate reflects the cost of hiring two contractual program coordinators to develop and implement the pilot program. It includes salaries, fringe benefits, one-time start-up costs, and ongoing operating expenses. Even though the mandated funding for the program does not begin until fiscal 2026, GOCPP needs to hire

the contractual positions in fiscal 2025 to identify high-crime areas eligible for the program and establish the process for eligible residents to apply to participate in the program.

Contractual Positions	2.0
Salaries and Fringe Benefits	\$97,141
Operating Expenses	<u>14,512</u>
Total FY 2025 State Expenditures	\$111,653

Future year administrative expenditures, which are covered by the mandated funding, total \$124,949 in fiscal 2026, \$130,371 in fiscal 2027, and \$34,008 in fiscal 2028. These estimates reflect (1) full salaries with annual increases and employee turnover; (2) annual increases in ongoing operating expenses; and (3) termination of the contractual positions on September 30, 2027, consistent with the bill’s termination date. As noted above, while it is assumed that program funding is provided in fiscal 2028 due to the mandated appropriation, the bill terminates at the end of the first quarter of that fiscal year. To the extent the contractual staff are retained through fiscal 2028 (despite the bill’s termination date), fiscal 2028 administrative expenditures are higher.

This estimate does not include any health insurance costs that could be incurred for specified contractual employees under the State’s implementation of the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Small Business Effect: The bill may have a meaningful impact on small businesses that sell and install doorbell cameras and security systems with doorbell cameras – or that provide training on the use of such cameras and systems – due to the funding provided under the bill for the purchase and installation of such cameras and systems.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has been introduced within the last three years. See HB 1045 of 2023.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Baltimore, Charles, Garrett, and Howard counties; City of Laurel; Town of La Plata; Governor’s Office of Crime Prevention and Policy; Department of Budget and Management; Department of State Police; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 13, 2024
rh/lgc

Analysis by: Shirleen M. E. Pilgrim

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