

Department of Fiscal Services
 Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 770 (Delegate Walkup)
 Environmental Matters

Medical Examiner - Autopsies - Body Transportation

This bill provides that, following a legally required autopsy, a county medical examiner must arrange and provide for the transportation of the body to a location within the State designated by the next of kin. The Post Mortem Examiners Commission is required to cover related costs.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures could increase by \$224,300 in FY 1997. Future years reflect annualization and inflation. Revenues would not be affected.

(in dollars)	FY 1997	FY 1998	FY 1999	FY 2000	FY 2001
GF Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditures	224,300	304,145	310,228	316,761	322,761
Net Effect	(\$224,300)	(\$304,145)	(\$310,228)	(\$316,761)	(\$322,761)

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

Local Effect: None.

Fiscal Analysis

Background: County medical examiners are part of the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) within the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. This bill specifies that the Post Mortem Examiners Commission must pay the costs of body transportations away from an autopsy site. However, while the commission exists within the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, it has no actual budget. It is assumed that the intent of this bill is to have these costs borne by resources budgeted to the OCME, which represents the staff of the commission. The fiscal 1997 budget allowance for body transportation services for the

Office of the Medical Examiner (OCME) is \$192,437, which represents anticipated costs for transporting bodies from the death scene to the OCME from throughout the State, excluding Baltimore City. In Baltimore City the OCME provides its own transportation services. Elsewhere, that service is performed on a contract basis with various providers. None of the current arrangements include transportations of bodies to a site designated by a next of kin.

State Expenditures: General fund expenditures could increase by an estimated \$224,296 in fiscal 1997, which reflects the bill's October 1, 1996 effective date. This estimate reflects the cost of hiring of one part-time Office Clerk to process an estimated additional 3,460 invoices for body transportation. It includes contractual salaries of \$5,945, fringe benefits, one-time start-up costs, and ongoing operating expenses, especially \$215,254 in additional contractual costs for body transport services. The information and assumptions used in calculating the estimate are stated below:

- There could be an additional 3,460 additional invoices for body transportation services;
- An estimated 1,798 cases in Baltimore City will require transportation costs away from the autopsy site that are not currently paid; and
- Approximately 2,302 cases from the rest of the State will also require body transport away from the autopsy site.

Salaries and Fringe Benefits	\$ 6,480
Body Transportation Services	215,254
Other Operating Expenses <u> 2,562</u>	
Total FY 1997 State Expenditures	\$224,296

Future year expenditures reflect 2% annual increases in the part-time contractual salary and ongoing operating expenses.

Information Source(s): Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (Office of the Chief Medical Examiner), Department of Fiscal Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 21, 1996
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