

Department of Fiscal Services
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE

Senate Bill 22 (Senator Ferguson)
Judicial Proceedings

Pro Se Litigation - Allowable Assistance

This bill permits trained nonlawyers to explain court procedures and to file forms on behalf of people without attorneys in small claims, bankruptcy, and specified family law cases. The bill also requires the Court of Appeals to adopt rules to govern training requirements for individuals giving the assistance and to establish pleading forms for use by pro se litigants in family law matters.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Expenditures could increase by \$35,666 in FY 1997; future year expenditures 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	33,700	40,900	42,400	44,000	45,600
Net Effect	(\$33,700)	(\$40,900)	(\$42,400)	(\$44,000)	(\$45,600)

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

Local Effect: None.

Fiscal Analysis

State Expenditures: General fund expenditures could increase by an estimated \$35,666 in fiscal 1997, which reflects the bill's October 1, 1996 effective date. This estimate reflects the cost of hiring one Assistant Administrator to establish training requirements; maintain and process records; certify training programs; verify program completion; run criminal record checks; establish and enforce a code of professional conduct; develop a complaint and disciplinary process; and produce standardized pleading forms. This estimate is based in part on the workload increase the Judiciary is experiencing for certification of hearing and language interpreters and the effect of similar legislation in Arizona and includes salaries of

\$22,018, fringe benefits, one-time start-up costs and ongoing operating costs.

Salaries and Fringe Benefits	\$29,626
Start-up Expenses	5,215
Operating Expenses	<u>825</u>
Total FY 1997 State Expenditures	\$35,666

Future year expenditures reflect (1) full salaries with 3.5% annual increases and 3% employee turnover; and (2) 2% annual increases in ongoing operating expenses.

Information Source(s): Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts), Department of Fiscal Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 27, 1996

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