

**Department of Fiscal Services**  
 Maryland General Assembly

**FISCAL NOTE**

House Bill 847 (Delegate Harkins, et al.)  
 Judiciary

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**Maryland Parole Commission - Hearings - Procedures**

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This bill alters the procedures for parole hearings. It also changes the notification requirements the Parole Commission is required to make before and after parole hearings, including publishing notices in newspapers.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** General fund expenditures could increase by \$611,700 in FY 1997, increasing to account for 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 | 611,700     | 823,500     | 840,500     | 857,800     | 875,500     |
| Net Effect      | (\$611,700) | (\$823,500) | (\$840,500) | (\$857,800) | (\$875,500) |

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

**Local Effect:** None.

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**Fiscal Analysis**

**State Expenditures:** General fund expenditures could increase by an estimated \$611,700 in fiscal 1997, which reflects the bill's October 1, 1996 effective date. This estimate reflects the cost of hiring one Office Secretary III to notify victims, State's Attorneys, and the Attorney General and to coordinate newspaper publication of notices required by the bill. It includes salaries of \$14,346, fringe benefits, one-time start-up costs, and ongoing operating expenses including \$538,900 for advertising. The information and assumptions used in calculating the estimate are stated below:

- 954 parole hearings per month;
- 1,908 notices must be published in newspapers every month: one hearing notice and one decision notice for each hearing;
- each notice will cost \$34; and
- proportionate increases in notification of the State's Attorneys and Attorney General.

|                              |              |             |
|------------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| Salaries and Fringe Benefits | \$ 20,574    | Advertising |
| 583,875                      |              |             |
| Other Operating Expenses     | <u>7,268</u> |             |

**Total FY 1997 State Expenditures \$611,717**

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.

Provisions of the bill permitting Division of Correction (DOC) representatives and any other person to testify at a parole hearing could lengthen open hearings. The Parole Commission is promulgating regulations that would permit the victim to present oral testimony of up to five minutes, but the bill would allow anyone to testify at an open hearing. Longer hearings could increase the workload of the commission, but is assumed to not have any direct fiscal impact as the commission may limit the people in attendance and the length of their testimony.

The Division of Correction could incur additional prisoner transportation costs in the event that an inmate is transferred to a different institution after the Parole Commission published the time and location of a hearing. It is anticipated that any such costs would be minimal and could be handled with existing resources.

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**Information Source(s):** Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (Maryland Parole Commission, Division of Correction), Department of Fiscal Services

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