

Department of Fiscal Services
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 949 (Delegate Rosenberg, et al.)
Judiciary

Reclaiming Public Spaces Act

This bill permits the seizure and forfeiture of a vehicle used or intended to be used in soliciting an act of prostitution or “the discharge, disposal, or dumping of any material or substance in violation of the laws of the State.” The bill sets out procedures for the seizure and sale of vehicles and the disposition of proceeds.

The bill also permits police officers to issue citations to charge people with certain drug offenses.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Indeterminate but potentially significant increase in general fund revenue. No effect on expenditures.

Local Effect: Indeterminate but potentially significant increase in revenues. Potential minimal increase in expenditures.

Fiscal Analysis

State Effect: The State Police and the Natural Resources Police, among other police agencies, enforce environmental laws. To the extent that these agencies seize and sell vehicles used to violate environmental or other laws, revenues could increase. This increase could be substantial if enforced against waste disposal or other environmental services companies that violate permit requirements or other environmental laws or regulations. These companies often have large fleets of expensive vehicles.

Provisions that allow seizure of vehicles used for prostitution and citations for drug offenses are not likely to have any significant effect on State revenues or expenditures as these laws are primarily enforced by local law enforcement agencies.

Local Effect: It is assumed that any increase in revenues would be at least partially offset by increased costs for towing, storage, and sale of the vehicles. Provisions that permit police officers to charge people with drug offenses by citation could make it easier for officers to enforce these laws but is not expected to have any measurable fiscal effect. However if large fleets of expensive vehicles were seized under this bill, revenues could increase substantially, depending on the number of violators and vehicles seized.

Information Source(s): Judiciary (District Court of Maryland), Department of State Police, Office of the Public Defender, Washington County, Department of Fiscal Services

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