

Department of Fiscal Services
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE
Revised

Senate Bill 699 (Senator Stone, et al.)

(Task Force to Examine Maryland's Crime Victims' Rights Laws)

Judicial Proceedings

Referred to Judiciary

Victims' Rights - Notification Procedures

This amended bill removes the September 30, 1996 sunset provision on a \$3 court fee assessed on minor traffic offenses paid to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund and the Victims of Crime Fund. The bill requires law enforcement and court and juvenile justice personnel to provide crime victims with a form provided by the State Board of Victims' Services; requires the State's Attorneys to keep crime victims aware of the status of their case; and requires the clerks of the circuit and juvenile courts to process forms regarding victim notification. The bill also expands the board from 17 to 22 members.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund and Victims of Crime Fund revenues and expenditures would continue as discussed below.

Local Effect: Potential increase in local expenditures. No effect on revenues. **This bill places a mandate on a unit of local government.**

Fiscal Analysis

State Revenues: Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund revenue of approximately \$2.1 million annually will be maintained to pay awards made by the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board. The fund receives a federal match of 40%, with a two-year lag. As a result, federal fund revenue of approximately \$847,000 will continue beyond fiscal 1999.

Victims of Crime Fund revenue of \$250,000 annually will be maintained to pay grants made by the State Board of Victims' Services.

State Expenditures: The bill requires the clerks of the circuit and juvenile courts to process

forms in an estimated 130,000 cases. The increase in workload would depend on the number of victims, the number of victims who request notification, and the number of events through final disposition of each case that require notifications. The increase cannot be reliably estimated at this time.

The State Board of Victims' Services is required to produce two separate forms to advise crime victims of their rights. The fiscal 1997 budget allowance for the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention contains funding for production of these forms.

Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund revenues are used to pay claims awarded by the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board. The board has a backlog of \$4.5 million in claims, and makes awards of \$2 to \$3 million annually. As revenue increases to the fund, expenditures will increase to address the backlog and pay new awards. Assuming a constant level of revenue and new claims of \$3 million annually, the backlog of cases will be eliminated in fiscal 2001 and the fund will begin to build a surplus. This surplus would be \$78,800 at the end of fiscal 2001.

Victims of Crime Fund revenues are used for grants awarded by the State Board of Victims' Services. As revenue increases to the fund, grant awards will presumably increase.

The fiscal 1997 budget allowance for the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board does not assume passage of this bill. As a result, this bill would presumably result in a supplemental budget or budget amendment to authorize distribution of these funds.

Victims' Services board members are reimbursed for expenses under the standard State travel regulations. Any increase in expenditures for the additional five board members would depend on the time, location, and frequency of board meetings. Expenses are assumed to be minimal and absorbable with existing board resources.

Local Expenditures: To the extent that State's Attorneys do not currently notify crime victims as required by this bill, local expenditures could increase. Any such increase cannot be reliably estimated at this time. Data is not readily available at this time to determine the property tax equivalent for each county.

Information Source(s): Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts), Office of the Public Defender, Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (Criminal Injuries Compensation Board), Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention, Department of Fiscal Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 26, 1996

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