

Department of Fiscal Services  
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 970 (Delegate Muse, *et al.*)  
Ways and Means

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Education - Public Schools - School Uniforms

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This bill requires local boards of education to implement the use of school uniforms for all public school students beginning in the 1998-1999 school year. The bill takes effect July 1, 1997.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** None.

**Local Effect:** Local expenditures would only increase if school systems decide to reimburse parents for the costs of the uniforms.

**Small Business Effect:** Minimal. Requiring the use of school uniforms may benefit retail stores that specialize in uniforms, some of which may be small businesses.

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Fiscal Analysis

**Local Expenditures:** This legislation requires each local board of education to implement a school uniform policy for all students. Public school enrollment statewide is projected to total approximately 836,000 in fiscal 1999, of whom about 31% (259,160) qualify for free or reduced price meals. School uniforms cost between \$20 to \$40, depending upon the type required. It is estimated that each child would need at least three uniforms. If the school systems choose to reimburse parents of low income children (defined as those receiving free or reduced price meals) for the costs of the uniforms, local expenditures could increase by \$15.5 million to \$31 million annually. However, if the students' parents are responsible for paying the uniforms' costs, local expenditures would not be affected.

**Additional Comments:** In Prince George's County, student uniforms are used in many

county schools. At Cooper Lane Elementary School and Lord Baltimore Middle School, the students' parents are responsible for paying the uniforms' costs.

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**Information Source(s):** Department of Fiscal Services, Prince George's County, Maryland  
State Department of Education, Maryland Association of Boards of Education

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