

Department of Fiscal Services
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE

Senate Bill 824 (Senators Trotter and Young)
Judicial Proceedings

Maryland Commission on the Fair Imposition of the Death Penalty

This bill creates an eight-member Maryland Commission on the Fair Imposition of the Death Penalty, which will terminate after July 1, 1998.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures could increase by approximately \$50,000 in FY 1998 only. Revenues would not be affected.

Local Effect: None. It is assumed that local government participation and cooperation with the commission can be accommodated with existing local resources.

Small Business Effect: None. The bill would not directly affect small businesses.

Fiscal Analysis

Bill Summary: The bill specifies the membership of the commission and requires the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals to direct the operation of the commission in collaboration with the Governor, the General Assembly, members of the State bar, and the public. The Chief Judge must also select a project director and the staff of the commission.

The commission's purpose is to determine the causes of the current racial disparity that exists in the imposition of the death penalty in the State. The bill provides specified undertakings for the commission. The commission is authorized to require various specified units of State and local government to provide data and fully cooperate with the commission. The commission's first meeting is required to take place by July 31, 1997.

While the members of the commission are prohibited from receiving compensation, they are entitled to expense reimbursements in accordance with the standard State travel regulations,

as provided in the State budget. The commission is required to submit an interim report with detailed recommendations to the General Assembly by December 31, 1998. Although the commission is required to terminate by July 1, 1998, it is required to submit its final report by December 31, 1998.

State Expenditures: It is estimated that approximately \$50,000 would be needed to cover the costs of the bill's requirements which include specified numbers of meetings, public hearings, and surveys. It is noted that the Commission on the Future of the Courts had a similar amount budgeted.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 24, 1997

nrd

Analysis by: Guy G. Cherry

Reviewed by: John Rixey

Direct Inquiries to:

John Rixey, Coordinating Analyst

(410) 841-3710

(301) 858-3710