

Department of Fiscal Services  
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 1055 (Delegate Elliott)  
Environmental Matters

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**Department of Transportation - Study of Sites for Open Water Placement of  
Dredged Material - Inclusion of Portion of the Deep Trough**

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This bill requires the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to include a feasibility study of areas of the Deep Trough as a placement site for dredged material in its current feasibility study on an open water placement site (Site 104). This additional requirement may not prevent the timely completion of the existing study.

The bill is effective July 1, 1997.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** General fund expenditures could increase by \$1.5 to \$2 million in FY 1998 only. Revenues would not be affected.

**Local Effect:** None.

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

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**Fiscal Analysis**

**Background:** Budget bill language from the 1996 session required MDOT to identify two or more sites in the upper Chesapeake Bay by January 1, 1997 for the development of artificial islands with sufficient capacity to meet the anticipated needs of the Port of Baltimore for at least 20 years. In addition, the language specified that open-water placement options for clean dredge material be available provided that such options can be accomplished in an environmentally sound manner. If MDOT does not meet the January 1, 1997 deadline for site identification, then the department must fund through existing resources an independent environmental impact assessment of the Deep Trough area as a potential site for the deposit

of dredged materials.

**State Effect:** MDOT advises that conducting a Deep Trough feasibility study would cost \$2 million. The current feasibility study on Site 104 (open-water placement) is estimated at approximately \$1.4 million. According to the Maryland Port Administration, a previous study on the Deep Trough was budgeted at \$1.5 million five or six years ago, though the project was never undertaken and the funds were reprogrammed. Therefore, it is estimated that costs could range between \$1.5 million and \$2 million depending upon the scope of the study undertaken.

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**Information Source(s):** Maryland Department of Transportation, Maryland Department of the Environment, Department of Fiscal Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 25, 1997

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