

Department of Fiscal Services
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 228 (Delegate Krysiak)
Environmental Matters

Public Safety - Carbon Monoxide Detectors

This bill requires any residential unit that (1) is issued a building permit on or after October 1, 1997; and (2) has a gas heating system, fuel burning appliances, or an attached garage to have at least one carbon monoxide detector installed. The manner and location of the detectors are to be approved by the State Fire Prevention Commission. Landlords are required to provide appropriate detectors for deaf or hearing-impaired tenants upon written request. The requirements of this bill may be enforced by the State Fire Marshall or a local or State authority with jurisdiction over fire and building codes. The fine for knowingly violating any regulations promulgated by the State Fire Prevention Commission or the requirements of this bill can be between \$300 and \$1,000, with each day during which a violation continues after knowledge or official notice being deemed a separate offense.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Potential minimal increase in general fund revenues due to the bill's penalty provision. Potential indeterminate increase in expenditures for State construction of residential occupancies. Enforcement could be handled with existing resources.

Local Effect: Potential indeterminate increase in expenditures for construction of residential occupancies. **This may impose a mandate on a unit of local government.** Enforcement could be handled with existing resources. No effect on revenues.

Small Business Effect: Potential minimal impact on small businesses as discussed below.

Fiscal Analysis

State Revenues: General fund revenues could increase under the bill's monetary penalty provision for those cases heard in the District Court, depending upon the number and amount of fines imposed. Nearly all fines collected by the Fire Marshall are collected as civil fines and go to the general fund.

State Expenditures: Any increase in workload for the State Fire Prevention Commission associated with promulgating regulations could be handled with existing resources.

To the extent that this bill applies to State constructed residential occupancies, such as college or correctional dormitories, State expenditures would increase. (While Fiscal Services is unaware of any proposed construction of new college dormitories, it is known that new correctional dormitories, to include about 832 beds in all, are planned by the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services within the next five years.) The number of carbon monoxide detectors that would be necessary cannot be reliably determined at this time. One detector currently costs about \$30 - \$50.

Assuming enforcement is based primarily on responding to complaints, enforcement by the State Fire Marshall could be handled with existing resources.

Local Expenditures: To the extent that this bill applies to any residential units constructed by localities, expenditures would increase. The number of carbon monoxide detectors that would be necessary cannot be reliably determined at this time. One detector currently costs about \$30 - \$50.

With regard to local building permits and inspections, the requirements of this bill could be handled with existing resources. The carbon monoxide detector requirement would be one more item for review and inspection. The additional cost would be minuscule on a per dwelling basis. To the extent that certain localities have jurisdiction over fire codes (Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Montgomery, and Prince George's counties, and Baltimore City), assuming that the enforcement is based primarily on responding to complaints, enforcement could be handled with existing resources.

Small Business Effect: The required installation of carbon monoxide detectors in new residential units may increase the cost of construction. To the extent that the property owners affected by this bill are small businesses, any impact is expected to be minimal as carbon monoxide detectors currently range in price from \$30 - \$50 (and that price can be expected to significantly decrease over time). It is noted that detectors for use by deaf or hearing-impaired individuals, if they are even available on the market, may cost significantly more

that the standard models.

Small businesses that sell carbon monoxide detectors may be positively affected due to increased sales.

Information Source(s): Department of Housing and Community Development; State Fire Marshal; Allegany, Montgomery, Prince George's, and Talbot counties; Department of Fiscal Services

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