

Department of Fiscal Services
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE

Senate Bill 328 (Senators Collins and Stone)
(Baltimore County Administration)

Judicial Proceedings

Child Sexual Offenders - Public Access to Registration Statements

This bill allows a person to obtain copies of the registration statements for all child sexual offenders who reside in a particular zip code(s) by submitting a written request to a local law enforcement agency. A local law enforcement agency must comply with such a request if the request contains: (1) the name and address of the person submitting the request; (2) the zip code(s) requested; and (3) the reason for requesting the information. A local law enforcement agency must also keep a record of all such requests.

In addition, the bill permits local law enforcement agencies to provide electronic access to copies of the registration statements if requested on the Internet.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. This bill applies to local law enforcement agencies only.

Local Effect: None. (See below.)

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

Fiscal Analysis

Local Expenditures: This bill applies to local law enforcement agencies only. Under current law child molester registration requirements (effective on October 1, 1995), there are 55 convicted child molesters registered statewide. Compliance with the provisions of this bill should not be an immediate problem for local law enforcement agencies, depending on the number of requests the provisions of this bill will generate.

It should be noted, however, that there were 646 convictions in the circuit courts for sex

offenses or sexually violent offenses in fiscal 1996. This data does not include the ages of victims. In any event, the number of requests for registration statements could begin to rise significantly as child sexual offenders convicted since 1995 begin to reach their incarceration release dates. Quantifying such an anticipated increase in requests is difficult. However, it is estimated that such requests of local law enforcement agencies can be handled with the existing resources of local jurisdictions for at least the near future.

Inasmuch as the bill merely permits, rather than requires, local law enforcement agencies to provide access to copies of the registration statements via the Internet, it is assumed that any local law enforcement agency would only provide such access if: (1) the agency is adequately connected to the Internet; and (2) compliance with the bill's provisions could be done with currently budgeted resources.

Information Source(s): Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (Data Services Division), Baltimore City, Frederick County, Department of Fiscal Services

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