

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 260 (Delegates Bissett and Owings)

Judiciary

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**Drunk Driving - Alcohol Concentration - Blood Test**

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This bill authorizes the use of a blood test to determine the alcohol concentration of a suspected drunk driver if a person qualified to administer a breath test is not available.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Potential minimal increase in general fund expenditures depending upon the number of additional blood tests administered.

**Local Effect:** None. Blood tests are administered by the Maryland State Police.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Fiscal Analysis**

**State Expenditures:** Generally, there is at least one person who is qualified to administer a breath test available on each shift in each State Police barracks. However, in some cases this individual may not be available during the two-hour time frame required to accurately test alcohol concentration. In such cases, the bill would allow a blood test to be administered in lieu of the breath test. As a point of reference, in calendar year 1997, 798 blood tests were administered due mainly to the lack of proper breath testing equipment.

General fund expenditures will increase to the extent that additional blood tests are administered by the State Police. Each blood test will cost: \$12 for the medical institution that draws the blood; \$5 for each blood kit to transport the blood to the State Police crime laboratory; and \$12 per hour for the court appearance of the qualified medical personnel who drew the blood.

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**Information Source(s):** Department of State Police, Prince George's County, Somerset County, Montgomery County, Charles County, Baltimore City, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 6, 1998

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