

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 1330 (Delegate Muse. *et al.*)

Judiciary

Crimes of Violence - Notification to Victims

This bill expands victim notification requirements applicable to State’s Attorneys, the Maryland Parole Commission, the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS), and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH). Essentially, the bill requires that specified notices must be sent to victims of crimes of violence, regardless of whether a notification request has been filed.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures would increase for DPSCS by \$254,100 in FY 1999. Revenues would not be affected. Out-year expenditures reflect annualization and inflation.

(in dollars)	FY 1999	FY 2000	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003
GF Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditures	254,100	281,900	291,800	302,100	312,800
Net Effect	(\$254,100)	(\$281,900)	(\$291,800)	(\$302,100)	(\$312,800)

Note: () - decrease; GF - general funds; FF - federal funds; SF - special funds

Local Effect: Significant operational and fiscal impact on State’s Attorneys offices. **This bill imposes a mandate on a unit of local government.**

Small Business Effect: None.

Fiscal Analysis

State Expenditures: The Victims' Affairs Unit of the Division of Correction (DOC) is currently headed by a part-time coordinator. At each regional DOC facility victims' affairs related work is done by 1/4 of an existing position. In 1997, there were about 700 victims' notification requests and 1,430 victims' impact statements. In a typical month, the victims' affairs program currently handles an average of 50 requests for notification and 120 victim impact statements.

In 1997, DOC received 2,300 violent offenders. Under this bill, DPSCS would be responsible for initial victims' notifications for all of these offenders at all seven regional facilities. Subsequent notifications relating to escapes, recaptures, transfers, death, or inmate release would also increase dramatically.

Accordingly, general fund expenditures could increase by an estimated \$254,090 in fiscal 1999, which accounts for the bill's October 1, 1998 effective date. This estimate reflects the cost of making the current part-time contractual coordinator of the Victims Affairs Unit a full-time coordinator and hiring one part-time Correctional Case Management Specialist, one Office Secretary, and seven Commitment Records Specialists to perform the notification functions required by this bill. It includes salaries, fringe benefits, one-time start-up costs, and ongoing operating expenses.

Salaries and Fringe Benefits	\$201,860
Additional Equipment	42,775
Other Operating Expenses	<u>9,455</u>
Total FY 1999 State Expenditures	\$254,090

Future year expenditures reflect: (1) full salaries with 3.5% annual increases and 3% employee turnover; and (2) 1% annual increases in ongoing operating expenses.

Under the bill, the Maryland Parole Commission is required to add all victims of violent crimes to its victim notification requirements prior to entering into or approving a "predetermined parole release agreement", if practicable. It is assumed that any additional workload for the commission can be coordinated with the full-time Victims' Affairs Unit at the DOC and the general operations of DPSCS.

The change in notification requirements would have no fiscal impact on either the Judiciary or DHMH.

Local Effect: The Office of the State's Attorneys' Coordinator advises that this bill would have a major impact on the operations of State's Attorneys, particularly in the larger jurisdictions. For example, since last April there have been just over 300 requests for notifications in Baltimore City. Under this bill, notices would be required to be sent to approximately 10,000 victims in the City. The coordinator's office believes that this bill would result in significant additional costs involving additional personnel and mailing expenses, but did not quantify that cost.

Information Source(s): Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts), Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (Division of Correction), Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (Mental Hygiene Administration), Office of the State's Attorneys' Coordinator, Department of Legislative Services

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Analysis by: Guy G. Cherry

Reviewed by: John Rixey

Direct Inquiries to:

John Rixey, Coordinating Analyst

(410) 841-3710

(301) 858-3710