

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 691 (Delegate Proctor)

Commerce and Government Matters

**School Buses - Display of Telephone Number for
Reports of Unsafe Driving Practices**

This bill authorizes a local board of education to require school buses operated within its jurisdiction to display a telephone number so that a motorist can report any unsafe driving practices of the school bus operator. If so required, local boards must: (1) designate a public agency, private contractor, or other person to receive, record, and investigate reports of unsafe driving practices; and (2) specify personnel, disciplinary, or law enforcement actions that may be taken against a school bus operator who is a subject to an unsafe driving report.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: Indeterminate. Local expenditures could increase to the extent that local boards require the display of telephone numbers on school buses.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Fiscal Analysis

Local Effect: Approximately 6,000 school vehicles are used to transport public school students in Maryland, of which 50% are publicly owned and 50% are operated by private contractors. The cost to display a telephone number on a school bus is estimated at \$50 per school bus. Assuming all local boards of education implement this requirement, local expenditures could increase by \$150,100. The actual impact would depend upon whether the local school system requires the display of telephone numbers on school buses and the number of school buses that are publicly owned. Around 90% (\$132,700) of potential local expenditures would occur in four jurisdictions (Baltimore, Frederick, Montgomery, and Prince George's counties) that have the most publicly owned school buses. **Exhibit 1** shows the cost to display telephone numbers on publicly owned school buses if all local boards of

education implement the requirement.

**Exhibit 1
Local School and Private Contractor's Costs**

County	Publicly Owned Buses	Local School Costs	Privately Owned Buses	Private Contractor's Cost
Allegany	16	\$800	102	\$5,100
Anne Arundel	65	\$3,250	367	\$18,350
Baltimore City	23	\$1,150	358	\$17,900
Baltimore	530	\$26,500	115	\$5,750
Calvert	0	\$0	108	\$5,400
Caroline	6	\$300	47	\$2,350
Carroll	15	\$750	249	\$12,450
Cecil	12	\$600	110	\$5,500
Charles	6	\$300	185	\$9,250
Dorchester	5	\$250	48	\$2,400
Frederick	239	\$11,950	78	\$3,900
Garrett	2	\$100	76	\$3,800
Harford	83	\$4,150	302	\$15,100
Howard	0	\$0	266	\$13,300
Kent	0	\$0	38	\$1,900
Montgomery	904	\$45,200	6	\$300
Prince George's	981	\$49,050	3	\$150
Queen Anne's	15	\$750	58	\$2,900
St. Mary's	9	\$450	131	\$6,550
Somerset	0	\$0	39	\$1,950
Talbot	7	\$350	27	\$1,350
Washington	84	\$4,200	61	\$3,050
Wicomico	0	\$0	111	\$5,550
Worcester	0	\$0	71	\$3,550
Statewide	3,002	\$150,100	2,956	\$147,800

In addition, designating a private contractor to record and investigate reports of unsafe

driving practices of school bus operators could increase local expenditures by around \$100,000 annually. This is based on an estimated cost of \$16 per vehicle, which is the current cost for this service in Prince George's County. However, if existing school staff record and investigate these reports, local expenditures would not be affected.

Small Business Effect: Private contractors operate 50% (2,956) of school vehicles used by public schools in Maryland. A large segment of these school vehicles are either owned or operated by individuals or by small companies. If all of these school buses were required to display telephone numbers, costs for private contractors could total approximately \$147,800 which is equivalent to \$50 per bus.

Information Source(s): Department of Transportation (Motor Vehicle Administration), Maryland State Department of Education, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 3, 1998

lc

Analysis by: Hiram L. Burch, Jr.

Reviewed by: John Rixey

Direct Inquiries to:

John Rixey, Coordinating Analyst

(410) 841-3710

(301) 858-3710