

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
1999 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 151 (Delegate Gettv)

Commerce and Government Matters

Vehicle Laws - Seat Belts

This bill provides that the current law requiring the use of seat belts in vehicles must be interpreted to require that the seat belt be worn in a manner to protect both the pelvic and upper torso portions of the body. The bill alters the definition of seat belt to mean a combination seat belt-shoulder harness, with integral, detachable, or separate pelvic and upper torso sections.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Indeterminate general fund revenue increase from the penalty provision applicable to this offense under the Maryland Vehicle Law. Any increase is assumed to be minimal. Enforcement could be handled with existing resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Fiscal Analysis

State Revenues: In fiscal 1998 there were 146,804 citations issued for seat belt violations by individuals aged 16 years or older and 6,548 citations issued for seat belt violations by individuals under 16 years of age. These violations carry fines of \$25 and \$48 respectively. Of the total citations issued 105,373 were prepaid. The District Court does not record the number of traffic trial cases that result in convictions.

The bill specifies the manner in which seat belts with seat and shoulder harnesses should be worn. To the extent that the bill's changes result in an increase in the number of citations

issued and subsequent convictions, general fund revenues could increase. However, the number of additional citations and convictions that may occur under this bill is unknown.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Transportation, Department of State Police, Judiciary (The District Court), Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 10, 1999

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