

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
1999 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 221 (Chairman, Environmental Matters Committee)
(Departmental - State Police, Dept. of)

Environmental Matters

Smoke Control Systems in High-Rise Buildings - Obsolete Provisions - Repealed

This departmental bill repeals requirements for obsolete smoke control systems in high-rise building construction.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Minimal. Newer engineering technologies and fire prevention systems have rendered “smoke control systems” obsolete. The Office of the State Fire Marshal has not held builders to the out-dated smoke control standards for some time. In effect, this bill generally codifies current inspection practices. Accordingly, such a change is not expected to materially impact the overall operations or budgetary needs of that office.

Local Effect: Minimal, for the same reasons cited above as applicable to high-rise inspections by local governments.

Small Business Effect: The Department of State Police has determined that this bill has a meaningful impact on small business (attached). Legislative Services concurs with this assessment as discussed below.

Fiscal Analysis

Small Business Effect: The State Fire Marshal reports that some builders continue to install the outdated “smoke control systems,” despite the newer technologies, because those systems are technically required under current law. This bill will allow for reduced building costs for such builders. Any potential savings for builders arising from this bill for small business

high-rise builders cannot be reliably estimated at this time, but are assumed to be potentially meaningful.

It should also be noted that sellers or manufacturers of the newer technologies might tend to receive a sales boost from this bill. However, any such increase in sales or revenues, as well as any corresponding reduction in sales or revenue for manufacturers or sellers of the outdated systems, are assumed not to be meaningful because such a change in building practices would have been reasonably anticipated.

Information Source(s): Department of State Police (State Fire Marshal), Department of Legislative Services

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lnc/jr

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