

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
1999 Session

FISCAL NOTE
Revised

House Bill 681 (Delegate Rosenberg, *et al.*)

Appropriations

Crime Prevention - Maryland Drug and Alcohol Grants Program Fund

This bill creates the Maryland Drug and Alcohol Grants Program Fund. The bill is effective July 1, 1999.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. This bill re-creates a grants program fund to implement grants that would already occur under current programs and authority of the Governor's Commission on Crime Control and Prevention. Grant allocation and reporting requirements could be handled with existing budgeted resources.

Local Effect: None. No new grant money would be available to local governments or programs.

Small Business Effect: None.

Fiscal Analysis

Bill Summary: The bill specifies the purpose of the fund as to provide funding for grants for neighborhood crime prevention, drug abuse, and alcohol abuse programs. The fund will be administered by the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention (GOCCP). The bill establishes that the fund must consist of money appropriated to the fund in the State budget, all investment earnings of the fund, and any other money from governmental or private sources.

Disbursements from the fund are required to be made by the Comptroller as directed by the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention or as approved by the State budget. Disbursements from the fund are required to supplement, and not substitute for, budgeted funds for similar purposes. The bill authorizes that, if the terms of a grant allow, a recipient may expend grant money beyond the fiscal year in which the grant was received.

State Effect: This bill reinstates a statutory grant program fund, also called the Maryland Drug and Alcohol Grants Program Fund, that was instituted by Chapter 607 of 1992 and which sunset after June 30, 1998. Since that time the GOCCP has continued to provide grants for the same purposes under a Community and Neighborhood Watch Program. The fiscal 2000 general fund allowance for this program is approximately \$595,000.

The commission received advice from the Office of the Attorney General that said, in part, that the authority granted to GOCCP to spend money on the purposes set out under the former special fund was not subject to a sunset provision. That advice also stated that, even with the sunset of the fund, GOCCP may continue to administer a grants program and to spend funds appropriated in the State budget for those same purposes.

The commission believes that the new drug and alcohol grants program could be funded with general funds from the commission's "Hot Spot" program money. The Governor's general fund budget request for "Hot Spot" for fiscal 2000 is approximately \$3.5 million.

Accordingly, the new program created by this bill could be accommodated with existing budgeted funds. Legislative Services notes, however, that funding for the purposes provided under this bill, and in the same general amounts, would continue with or without the statutory provisions of this bill.

In addition, the bill requires the GOCCP to allocate at least 10% of these grants to programs that provide services in two or more counties. The 10% allocation provision does not apply to a program that has received funds from the Hotspot Community Initiative. The GOCCP is required to report to the General Assembly by October 1 of each year on all programs receiving grants from this special fund.

Information Source(s): Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History:

First Reader - March 9, 1999

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Revised - House Third Reader - April 1, 1999

Analysis by: Guy G. Cherry

Direct Inquiries to:

John Rixey, Coordinating Analyst

(410) 946-5510

(301) 970-5510