

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
1999 Session

FISCAL NOTE

Senate Bill 742 (Senator Munson)

Judicial Proceedings

Preschools - Drug Free School Zones

This bill makes it a crime to manufacture, distribute, dispense, or possess with intent to distribute a controlled dangerous substance within 1,000 feet of a preschool. Violators are guilty of a felony. The local boards of education may authorize the posting of “drug free school zones” at public and nonpublic preschools.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Potential minimal increase in general fund expenditures due to the bill’s penalty provisions. Revenues would not be affected.

Local Effect: Potential minimal increase in revenues due to the bill’s penalty provision. Potential increase in local expenditures.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Fiscal Analysis

State Expenditures: General fund expenditures could increase minimally as a result of the bill’s incarceration penalty due to more people being committed to Division of Correction (DOC) facilities and increased payments to counties for reimbursement of inmate costs. The number of people convicted of this proposed crime is expected to be minimal.

Persons serving a sentence longer than one year are incarcerated in DOC facilities. Currently the average total cost per inmate, including overhead, is estimated at \$1,600 per month. This bill alone, however, should not create the need for additional beds, personnel, or facilities. The average variable cost of housing a new DOC inmate (food, medical care, etc.), excluding overhead, is \$275 per month.

Local Revenues: Revenues could increase minimally as a result of the bill's monetary penalty provision from cases heard in the circuit courts.

Local Expenditures: There are around 500 prekindergarten and kindergarten nonpublic schools operating in the State. Most public prekindergarten programs are located in elementary schools and are already authorized to post drug free school zones signs. Each sign is estimated to cost \$50. If, for instance, four signs are posted at each school, the cost per school could total \$200. Accordingly, purchasing drug free school zones signs at each nonpublic prekindergarten/kindergarten school would cost approximately \$100,000. However, any such expenditures resulting from posting of additional signs would depend upon whether the local boards decide to authorize such signs.

The Department of Legislative Services advises that installing the signs could be handled by each private school's maintenance staff at no additional cost.

Information Source(s): Maryland Association of Boards of Education, Department of Legislative Services

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Analysis by: Hiram L. Burch, Jr.

Direct Inquiries to:
John Rixey, Coordinating Analyst
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510