

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
1999 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 623 (Delegate Gordon. *et al.*)

Judiciary

Juvenile Causes - Closed Hearings

This bill provides that in a proceeding in which a child is alleged to be in need of supervision or assistance or to have committed a delinquent act, the court shall exclude the general public from a hearing and admit only those persons having a direct interest in the proceeding and their representatives. The court shall open a proceeding to the general public if the child is alleged to have committed a delinquent act that would be classified as a violent felony if committed by an adult, the child is 16 years of age or older, and the court determines an overriding public interest exists because of the nature of the alleged delinquent act.

Under current law, in a proceeding in which a child is alleged to be in need of supervision or assistance or to have committed a delinquent act, the court may exclude the general public from a hearing and admit only those persons having a direct interest in the proceeding and their representatives. Unless good cause to the contrary is shown, a court shall open a proceeding to the general public if the child is alleged to have committed a delinquent act that would be classified as a felony if committed by an adult.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill would probably result in the closing of more juvenile hearings to the public, but would not have a material effect on governmental finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Juvenile Justice, Judiciary (Administrative Office

of the Courts), Office of the Public Defender, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 9, 1999

lnc/jr

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