

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
1999 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 905 (Delegates Heller and Hixson)

Commerce and Government Matters

State Highway Administration - Bridge Sponsorship Program

The bill provides for a Bridge Sponsorship Program. The bill authorizes the State Highway Administration (SHA) to award the right to sponsor any bridge located on a State highway to the highest bidder in an open and competitive bidding process. The SHA is responsible for the construction and maintenance of sponsorship signs placed at the entrance of the bridge that identify the sponsor. The highest bid must be sufficient to recover SHA's costs and must result in a surplus. The surplus would be distributed 70% to the Transportation Trust Fund and 30% to the county agency with responsibility for highway maintenance in the county where the sign is placed.

The bill also specifies the length of each sponsorship, the design and size of signs, and the placement of signs.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Potential significant increase in Transportation Trust Fund revenue.

Local Effect: Potential significant increase in revenue.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Fiscal Analysis

State Effect: The State Highway Administration and the Maryland Transportation Authority are responsible for the maintenance of over 2,400 bridges in the State, including well traveled, highly visible bridges such as William Preston Lane, Jr. Memorial Bridge (Chesapeake Bay Bridge) and the Francis Scott Key Bridge. It is assumed that the revenue associated with the sponsorship of the larger, more visible bridges could be significant. However, Legislative Services does not have any information on which to base an estimate on the amount of interest that could be generated by such a program.

Expenditures would not be affected because the bill allows SHA to recover any costs associated with the construction and maintenance of sponsorship signs.

Local Effect: The bill allows the local agency with responsibility for highway maintenance in the county where the sign is placed to receive 30% of proceeds of any sponsorship in that county. To the extent that bridges are sponsored in local jurisdictions, local revenues could increase. Local jurisdictions with more visible bridges can expect to receive a significantly larger share of the program's proceeds.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Transportation, Department of Legislative Services

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Analysis by: Jody J. Minnich

Direct Inquiries to:

John Rixey, Coordinating Analyst

(410) 946-5510

(301) 970-5510