

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
1999 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 707 (Delegate Marriott)

Judiciary

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Crimes - Access to Firearms by Minors - Felony

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This bill changes from a misdemeanor to a felony the crime of storing or leaving a loaded firearm in a location where an unsupervised minor could gain access to it. The bill increases the maximum penalties for this offense from a fine of \$1,000 to a fine of \$5,000 and/or imprisonment for five years.

In addition, the bill establishes that the District Court has exclusive original jurisdiction for this offense.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** Potential minimal increase in general fund revenues and expenditures due to the bill's increased penalty provision.

**Local Effect:** Potential minimal increase in expenditures due to the bill's incarceration penalty provisions. Revenues would not be affected.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Fiscal Analysis

**State Revenues:** General fund revenues could increase minimally as a result of the bill's increased monetary penalty provision since these cases would continue to be heard in the District Court.

**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.

Persons serving a sentence of one year or less in a jurisdiction other than Baltimore City are sentenced to local detention facilities. The State reimburses counties for part of their incarceration costs, on a per diem basis, after a person has served 90 days. State per diem reimbursements for fiscal 2000 are estimated to range from \$8 to \$48 per inmate depending upon the jurisdiction. Persons sentenced to such a term in Baltimore City are generally incarcerated in DOC facilities. The Baltimore City Detention Center (BCDC), a State operated facility, is used primarily for pretrial detentions.

**Local Expenditures:** Expenditures could increase minimally as a result of the bill's new incarceration penalty. Counties pay the full cost of incarceration for people in their facilities for the first 90 days of the sentence, plus part of the per diem cost after 90 days. Per diem operating costs of local detention facilities are expected to range from \$15 to \$80 per inmate in fiscal 2000.

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**Information Source(s):** Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts), Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (Division of Correction), Department of Legislative Services

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