

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
1999 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 927 (Delegate Brown. *et al.*)

Economic Matters

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Commission to Study the Needs of Low-Wage Marylanders

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This bill establishes a 17-member Commission to Study the Needs of Low-Wage Marylanders, staffed by the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation. The bill requires the commission to report its findings and recommendations in an annual report to the Governor and the General Assembly before October 1 of each year.

The bill is effective July 1, 1999 and sunsets June 30, 2004.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** None. It is assumed that task force members would be reimbursed for expenses under the standard State travel regulations. Any such expenditures would depend upon the time, location, and frequency of task force meetings. Expenses are assumed to be minimal and could be handled with existing budgeted resources. The Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation could staff the task force with existing personnel.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Fiscal Analysis

**Bill Summary:** The bill establishes a Commission to Study the Needs of Low-Wage Marylanders to:

- study data and other research maintained by the State and other states and the federal government that relate to poverty and the needs of low-wage

Marylanders;

- determine and assess the factors, including economic and demographic factors, and public policies that affect the needs of low-wage Marylanders;
- assess the impact of low-wage Marylanders on small businesses located in areas of poverty and on economic growth in regional employment markets;
- determine methods to stimulate private and public partnerships designed to increase the earnings and employment opportunities of low-wage Marylanders;
- work with the business community and higher education facilities to determine ways to increase the earnings and employment opportunities of low-wage Marylanders;
- develop cost estimates for expanding child care subsidies to those families with incomes 200% below the federal poverty level, and make recommendations on a plan to phase in subsidies;
- survey housing costs by locality and make recommendations on adequate housing subsidies for low-wage Marylanders;
- hold public meetings for the purpose of collecting data; and
- develop any recommendations that the commission considers appropriate for changes in statutes, regulations, organization, or procedures that will meet the needs of low-wage Marylanders.

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**Information Sources:** Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 1, 1999

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