

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
1999 Session

FISCAL NOTE  
Revised

House Bill 1069 (Delegate Bozman. *et al.*)

Judiciary

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**Crimes - Destructive Devices - False Statement or Rumor - Biological Substances**

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This bill prohibits a person from knowingly circulating or transmitting false statements or rumors concerning the location or possible release of "toxic material." The bill alters the definition of toxic material by including precursors of certain current law toxic material and specified biological substances. The bill also provides that toxic material is not limited to those substances specifically included in the statutory definition.

Violators are guilty of a felony and subject to current law penalty provisions applicable to similar felonies involving spreading false rumors, including a maximum fine of \$10,000 and/or maximum imprisonment for ten years. Persons convicted of violating these provisions may also be required to pay restitution.

This bill is effective July 1, 1999.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Potential minimal increase in general fund expenditures due to the applicable incarceration penalty provision. Revenues would not be affected.

**Local Effect:** Potential minimal increase in revenues due to the applicable monetary penalty provision. Expenditures would not be affected.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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## Fiscal Analysis

**State Expenditures:** General fund expenditures could increase minimally as a result of the applicable incarceration penalty due to more people being committed to Division of Correction (DOC) facilities. 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 applicable monetary penalty provision since these cases would be heard in the circuit courts.

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**Information Source(s):** Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (Division of Correction), Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 16, 1999  
ncs/jr Revised - House Third Reader - April 5, 1999

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