

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2000 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 946 (Delegate Cole. *et al.*)

Judiciary

Assisted Suicide - Prohibition

This bill alters the current law prohibition against assisted suicide primarily by specifying that the prohibition applies to an “adult” assisting another person's suicide. The bill eliminates a specified circumstance by which this crime could occur by deleting reference to causing a suicide “by coercion, duress, or deception.” The existing felony penalties for this prohibition are not changed.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Minimal. Limiting the scope of this prohibition is not expected to significantly affect State finances or operations.

Local Effect: Minimal. Limiting the scope of this prohibition is not expected to significantly affect local finances or operations.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: An “individual” is prohibited from assisting another person to commit suicide by various manners, including by knowingly causing a suicide to occur “by coercion, duress, or deception.” Violators are guilty of a felony and subject to maximum penalties of a fine of \$10,000 and/or imprisonment for one year.

Background: Maryland's prohibition against assisted suicide took effect on October 1, 1999. The only known prosecution to date under this provision has been in Anne Arundel County when a 16-year old Crofton boy was charged with assisting in the October 18 suicide of his 15-year old girlfriend. The boy was also charged with possession of a handgun and reckless endangerment.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

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

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mld/jr

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