

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2000 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 57 (Delegate Leonold. *et al.*)

Judiciary

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Anne Arundel County - Marriage License Fee - Premarriage Education

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This bill provides that, in Anne Arundel County, if an applicant for a marriage license presents sufficient evidence that the parties to be married have completed a premarriage education course within one year before the date of the application, the fee for the license is \$2 instead of the usual \$10.

The clerk of the circuit court shall retain \$1 of the fee and pay \$1 of the fee into the general fund of the county. The Anne Arundel County health department must compile and provide to the clerk a list of premarriage education courses offered in the county and adjacent counties. The clerk shall make the list available to each applicant for a license.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** The bill would not directly affect State operations or finances.

**Local Effect:** Minimal decrease in revenue for Anne Arundel County.

**Small Business Effect:** Potential minimal.

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Analysis

**Current Law:** The basic statewide fee for a marriage license is \$10, of which \$5 is retained by the clerk of the circuit court and \$5 goes to the county general fund. In Anne Arundel County, as in many other counties, there is an additional fee of \$45 for each license to promote or fund domestic violence programs.

**Background:** Florida has a statute offering a reduced marriage license fee for completion of a premarriage education course.

**Local Revenues:** For every premarriage education course completed, Anne Arundel County would lose \$8 (\$4 lost by clerk, \$4 lost by general fund). In fiscal 1999, 4,010 marriage licenses were issued in Anne Arundel County, generating \$20,050 each for the clerk's office and the county general fund.

The number of couples who would pay the reduced marriage license fee cannot be estimated at this time. However, in view of the relatively small size of the discount (14.5% taking into account the additional \$45 fee), it is expected that any revenue reduction resulting from this bill would be minimal.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** HB 1253 of 1997 would have extended the waiting period for a marriage license from 48 hours to 60 days, unless certain exceptions applied, one of which was that the parties have completed a premarriage education course. That bill received an unfavorable report from the Judiciary Committee.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Anne Arundel County, Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts), Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - January 25, 2000  
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