

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2000 Session

**FISCAL NOTE**

House Bill 527 (Delegate Donoghue. *et al.*)

Environmental Matters

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**Western Maryland Wellmobile**

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This bill establishes a Western Maryland Wellmobile Program. The University of Maryland School of Nursing must: (1) administer the program; (2) develop partnerships with local entities to facilitate the delivery of primary and preventive health care services; (3) seek additional funding; and (4) submit a report by September 1 of each year to the Governor and the General Assembly detailing the operation and management of the program. The bill requires the Governor to include at least \$400,000 in the State budget in fiscal 2002 and at least \$200,000 annually in subsequent years to fund the program. Funding may be provided through the Cigarette Restitution Fund.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Special and/or general fund expenditures could increase by at least \$400,000 in FY 2002. Future year expenditures would be at least \$200,000 annually. Revenues would not be affected.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** There is no statutory basis for the Western Wellmobile Program.

**Background:** The Governor's Wellmobile Program was established in 1994. The program provides direct health services for families in medically under-served communities that have poor health status indicators. Currently, two Wellmobiles deliver services to Marylanders in Prince George's, Montgomery, Dorchester, Worcester, and Baltimore counties. The program has not been funded by the State since fiscal 1999. Funds had been appropriated to the Community Public Health Administration (CPHA) within the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. The University of Maryland School of Nursing is administering the Wellmobile program, funded through various private grants.

The Cigarette Restitution Act of 1999 outlined nine legislative spending priorities for the Cigarette Restitution Fund addressing health- and tobacco-related issues. While the statute mandates that at least 50% of the spending should be focused on the nine priority areas, the Governor has considerable latitude in constructing a budget proposal for the use of the funds. The Governor's proposed fiscal 2001 budget meets the statutory requirements, with \$100.5 million, or 67% of the settlement funds, allocated to health- and tobacco-related programs. The total fiscal 2001 allowance for the Cigarette Restitution Fund is \$150.4 million.

**State Effect:** The bill allocates at least \$400,000 in the fiscal 2002 budget for the Western Wellmobile Program. The bill does not specifically require the Governor to fund the Wellmobile program out of the Cigarette Restitution Fund.

Special and/or general fund expenditures for the School of Nursing will increase by at least \$400,000 in fiscal 2002. In order to meet the bill's requirement to provide a Wellmobile in Western Maryland, the School of Nursing advises that it will earmark approximately \$200,000 for the purchase of one new Wellmobile. The remaining \$200,000 will be used to hire three new positions and to operate, manage, and administer the program.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** University System of Maryland, Maryland Insurance Administration, Department of Legislative Services

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