

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2000 Session

FISCAL NOTE

Senate Bill 269 (Senator Munson)

Budget and Taxation

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**William H. Amoss Fire, Rescue, and Ambulance Fund - Thermal Imaging Devices**

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This bill requires the Governor place in the fiscal 2002 State budget, \$1 million for the William H. Amoss Fire, Rescue, and Ambulance Fund, in addition to the moneys that would normally be allocated to the fund, to be equitably distributed to the counties so that each county could purchase at least one thermal imaging device without having to reduce moneys otherwise available.

The bill also: (1) explicitly includes thermal imaging devices among apparatuses that are allowed to be acquired or rehabilitated with Amoss fund moneys; and (2) expands, as specified, a current law prohibition against fund moneys being used to acquire or replace fire hydrants, water mains or emergency alarm systems.

This bill is effective July 1, 2000.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** General fund expenditures would increase by \$1.0 million in FY 2002 for distribution by the William H. Amoss Fire, Rescue, and Ambulance Fund.

**Local Effect:** Thermal imaging devices for use by fire and rescue companies retail for between \$10,000 and \$20,000. An equal distribution of \$1 million to the counties would provide each county with \$41,667 in additional revenue for the purchase of these devices. However, since the bill only requires the fund to distribute to each county enough money to purchase at least one device, the amount of money actually distributed to each county by the fund cannot be readily predicted.

**Small Business Effect:** Potential meaningful. To the extent that these devices would be purchased by each county from a thermal imaging vendor that is a small business, this bill

could represent a meaningful business opportunity.

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## Analysis

**Current Law:** The purchase of thermal imaging devices by the State is not currently provided for in statute.

**Background:** All objects have a certain temperature and emit waves of thermal energy called infrared radiation. The hotter an object, the more energy waves are emitted. Thermal imaging devices provide a vision capability with zero reflected visible light present because they translate a thermal picture into an electrical picture, then into a visual image for the human eye. Thus, thermal imagers can "see" in the dark or in heavy smoke conditions.

**Additional Comments:** The State Fire Marshal reports that Baltimore County has purchased three such devices at an average cost of \$20,000 each.

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## Additional Information

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Department of State Police (State Fire Marshal), Maryland State Firemen's Association, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 20, 2000  
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